Men-at-Arms • 456

OSPREY PUBLISHING

Mounted Grenadiers of the Imperial Guard

Ronald Pawly • Illustrated by Patrice Courcelle

RONALD PAWLY was born in Antwerp, Belgium, in 1956 and still lives and works in that city. He is a respected member of several international societies for Napoleonic studies, and an expert on 19th century military portraiture. He is the author of the monumental *The Red Lancers: Anatomy of a Napoleonic Regiment* (Crowood Press, 1998), and of a study of Napoleonic veterans' tombs in Belgium. He has previously written for Osprey Men-at-Arms 355, *Wellington's Belgian Allies 1815*; MAA 371, *Wellington's Dutch Allies 1815*; MAA 371, *Napoleon's Red Lancers*; and MAA 378, *Napoleon's Guards of Honour*.

PATRICE COURCELLE was born in northern France in 1950 and has been a professional illustrator for some 20 years. Entirely self-taught, he has illustrated many books and magazine articles for Continental publishers, and his work hangs in a number of public and private collections. His dramatic and lucid style has won him widespread admiration in the field of military illustration.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 3

THE CONSULAR GUARD 4
- 1796–99: the Directory – '18 Brumaire' – the First Consul
- 1800: organization of the Consular Guard – Marengo
- 1801–03: expansion of the Guard – the Lefévre document

FROM CONSULAR GUARD TO IMPERIAL GUARD 9
- 1804–05: Colonel-Major Lepic – regimental reputation: the 'Giants', 'Gods', or 'High Heels'
- 1805: the Austerlitz campaign
- 1806–07: the Jena-Eylau campaign

DISPERSED DEPLOYMEN
- 1808: Spain
- 1809: the Essling-Wagram campai
- 1810–11: rotations and paperwor

RUSSIA, 1812

REBUILDING THE REGIMEI
- Finding men and horses

THE DEFENSIVE CAMPAIG
- Germany, 1813
- France, 1814

KING AND EMPEROR
- The First Abdication
- The Hundred Days

PLATE COMMENTARIES 44

INDEX 48

Men-at-Arms • 456

Mounted Grenadiers of the Imperial Guard

Ronald Pawly • Illustrated by Patrice Courcelle
Series editor Martin Windrow

First published in Great Britain in 2009 by Osprey Publishing,
Midland House, West Way, Botley, Oxford OX2 0PH, UK
443 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016, USA

Email: info@ospreypublishing.com

© 2009 Osprey Publishing Ltd.

All rights reserved. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, elec-trical, chemical, mechanical, optical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner. Enquiries should be addressed to the Publishers.

ISBN: 978 184603 449 7
ebook ISBN: 978 184908 133 7

Editor: Martin Windrow
Design: Melissa Orrom Swan, Oxford
Index by Fineline Editorial Services
Originated by PPS Grasmere, Leeds, UK
Printed in China through World Print Ltd.

09 10 11 12 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Artist's Note

Readers may care to note that the original paintings from which the colour plates in this book were prepared are available for private sale. All reproduction copyright whatsoever is retained by the Publishers. All enquiries should be addressed to:

Patrice Courcelle, 33 avenue de Vallons, 1410 Waterloo, Belgium

The Publishers regret that they can enter into no correspondence upon this matter.

FOR A CATALOGUE OF ALL BOOKS PUBLISHED BY OSPREY MILITARY AND AVIATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Osprey Direct, c/o Random House Distribution Center,
400 Hahn Road, Westminster, MD 21157
Email: uscustomerservice@ospreypublishing.com

Osprey Direct, The Book Service Ltd, Distribution Centre,
Colchester Road, Frating Green, Colchester, Essex, CO7 7DW
E-mail: customerservice@ospreypublishing.com

Osprey Publishing is supporting the Woodland Trust, the UK's leading Woodland conservation charity, by funding the dedication of trees.

www.ospreypublishing.com

OPPOSITE **A rare and unusual silhouette of a Mounted Grenadier of the Garde du Directoire. The trooper wears a dark blue *surtout* with scarlet collar (which would soon be replaced with dark blue). Yellow woollen aiguillettes are worn on the left shoulder; those of the later Consular and Imperial guards would be worn on the right. Instead of his bearskin the sitter wears a low, wide bicorn hat with a tricolour national cockade and a red plume. His hair worn in a queue, and his earring, are in the fashion of the 1790s. He carries a sabre whose hilt looks similar to that of the Mounted Chasseurs. (Picture & collection of J.N., France)**

NAPOLEON'S MOUNTED GRENADIERS OF THE IMPERIAL GUARD

INTRODUCTION

THE SINGLE GREATEST turning-point in the ages-old process of the evolution of weapons and tactics was the introduction of gunpowder. In the West, this happened in the 14th century, and within a hundred years it was changing the balance of advantage between field armies and the defenders of fortified places. Gunpowder took longer to usurp the leading place of bladed weapons in pitched battle, but by the middle of the 17th century muskets were beginning to outnumber pikes in the ranks of the infantry. Even so, the slowness of reloading them allowed horse cavalry to retain its importance as the shock arm in battle for another 200 years.

It was in the second half of the 17th century that France introduced grenadiers, armed with hand grenades detonated by a burning time-fuse, as assault troops to play a leading part in attacks on fortifications. These soldiers were carefully selected, highly motivated risk-takers, and in all contemporary armies they soon acquired an elite reputation. They had to be tall, strong men, since their length of arm and bodily strength governed how far they could throw the heavy grenades of the period. In 1667, four men for each French infantry company were trained as grenadiers, and as early as 1671 this picked squad had evolved into a whole grenadier company for each battalion. In 1676 mounted grenadiers were created in Louis XV's household troops, reflecting the range of battlefield roles then expected of cavalry. In less than a decade the grenadiers had become the elite soldiers of the army, and their status was reflected by means of distinctive uniforms. Originally a pointed 'mitre' cap was introduced for practical reasons, replacing the broad-brimmed hat of the 17th century soldier so as to allow a grenadier to sling his musket and throw grenades overarm. Later the grenadier cap became taller, and evolved into a bearskin bonnet, to exaggerate the already impressive height of the men chosen for this role. In 1748 a separate regiment of Grenadiers de France was formed. By now the actual use of grenades in battle had greatly declined, but the title and the imposing uniforms were retained, now marking out soldiers selected for their appearance and height (they were also encouraged to grow fierce moustaches).

THE CONSULAR GUARD

Although the light regiment of Mounted Chasseurs (Chasseurs à Cheval) are sometimes considered as the senior unit of Napoleon's Guard cavalry, the origins of the Mounted Grenadiers may be traced back to the years of the French Revolution. After the confusions of 1789–92, the *levée en masse* of 1793 and the 'Terror' of 1793–94, the new governing body or Directory established a milder political climate from November 1795. That same year a Garde du Directoire Exécutif and a Garde du Corps Legislative were organized to protect the premises where the two bodies of representatives assembled. In October 1796 it was stipulated that a mounted corps composed of two companies, totalling 112 men (including staff) and commanded by a squadron-leader, was to be organized. Five months later, on 27 February 1797, this Mounted Guard of the Directory received the title of Grenadiers à Cheval – Mounted Grenadiers.

The military disasters of 1798 and 1799 shook the Directory, and after years of turmoil, corruption and revolution France was ready for a new and more stable regime. On 9 November 1799, in what is generally known as the 'coup of 18 Brumaire', the 30-year-old artilleryman General Napoleon Bonaparte – garlanded with victory in Italy seven years before, and now returned from the frustrating cul-de-sac of the Egyptian campaign – seized national power in Paris. That night, a remnant of the Council of Ancients abolished the Constitution of the Year III, ordained the Consulate, and legalized the coup d'état in favour of Bonaparte as First Consul. For the next 15 years this single remarkable man would dominate the history of Europe. That same day, the former Garde du Directoire Exécutif and Garde du Corps Legislative were united into a single corps, and on 28 November this Consular Guard would receive its first organization. It would comprise a staff, two battalions of foot, and the two squadrons of Mounted Grenadiers of the former Mounted Guard of the Directory.[1]

Drawing by Poisson and Châtaignier of a Mounted Grenadier at the start of the Consulate, still wearing a uniform that shows an *Ancien Régime* cut, with long narrow lapels, long tails with hooked turnbacks, and aiguillettes on the left shoulder. The hairstyle was called *oreilles de chien* – 'dog's ears'. A curiosity is that this trooper wears his sword belt over his shoulder, as was done when they served dismounted. (Picture & collection of J.N., France)

The staff of the Mounted Grenadiers was organized with 1 *chef de brigade* (colonel), 2 *chefs d'escadrons* (squadron-leaders), 1 adjutant-major, 2 standard-bearers, 1 adjutant *sous-officier* and 1 trumpet-corporal. Each of the two squadrons was composed of two companies. Each company had 1 captain, 1 first lieutenant, 1 second lieutenant, 1 sub-lieutenant, 1 sergeant-major, 4 sergeants, 1 quartermaster, 8 corporals, 1 farrier, 2 trumpeters, 64 grenadiers and a *frater* (barber): total, 86 all ranks per company. For the time being, there were no changes to the uniforms except for the replacement of the old buttons showing the Republican fasces symbol and the words 'Garde de République Française', changed to 'Garde des Consuls'. They also received new standards, trumpet-banners and drum-banners.

1 On 9 September 1799 the cavalry of the Directory Guard had 2 captains, 2 lieutenants, 2 sub-lieutenants, 2 sergeant-majors, 4 sergeants, 2 quartermasters, 8 corporals, 4 trumpeters and 90 grenadiers: total, 287 all ranks.

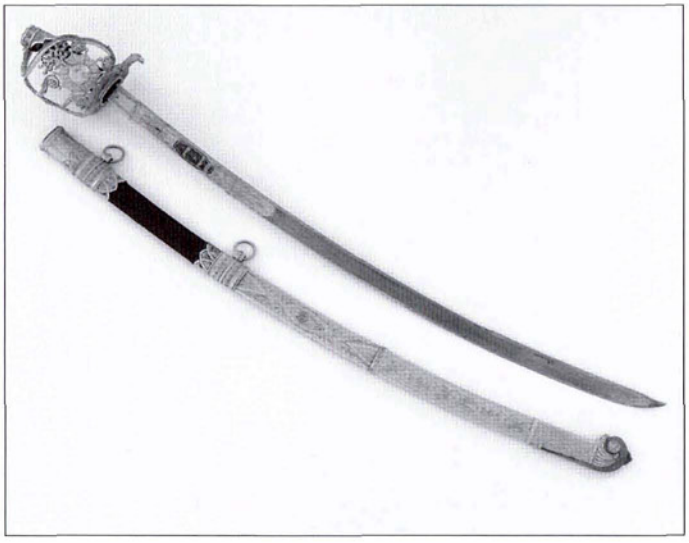
On 2 December 1799, Bonaparte wrote to the Minister of War that Gen Joachim Murat would command the Consular Guard, with Col Bessières in command of the cavalry component. One month later, on 3 January 1800, he increased the size of each company of Mounted Grenadiers from 64 troopers to 96, giving the two squadrons a combined strength of 468 all ranks. Additionally, the Mounted Grenadiers were allowed to have a horse drummer. In the same decree Bonaparte introduced a company of Mounted Chasseurs into the Consular Guard. In total, the entire Guard, foot and horse, was 2,089 strong, and on 15 February it received 75 musicians, all coming from the infantry but of whom 25 were mounted.

The regiment's first colonel, General of Division Count Michel Ordener (1755–1811). First Equerry to the Empress and Governor of the Palace of Compiègne, he is portrayed here, by H.F. Riesner, in the costume of a Senator of the Empire in 1806. (Versailles; Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, © RMN / Gérard Blot)

Marengo, 14 June 1800

In April 1800 the First Consul's correspondence was mainly concerned with preparations for a new Italian campaign. He intended to lead an Army of the Reserve against some 100,000 Austrian troops under Baron Melas, who was menacing Masséna's 40,000 French in north-eastern Italy. Masséna's army had been scattered or shut up in Genoa by 26 April when a first Guard detachment left for Dijon, where the army was being concentrated. More columns would follow them south. Unlike the Mounted Chasseurs, the Mamelukes and the infantry of the Guard, the Mounted Grenadiers were now serving for the first time under the direct command of Bonaparte, and the second Italian campaign would bring the regiment's first laurels.

Napoleon's small army crossed the Alps in May, and by the time Genoa fell on 4 June he had got astride the enemy's lines of communication and supply. Nevertheless, when he ran unexpectedly against Melas' 34,000 Austrians at Marengo on 14 June Napoleon's army was dispersed and he had only some 18,000 men under his hand. Although enveloped from the right and driven back 2 miles, Napoleon kept his head, and his men held stubbornly while they waited for the arrival of Gen Desaix's corps to turn the day. The Mounted Grenadiers waited calmly under heavy enemy fire; 'Keep your chins up!', shouted their sergeants. In late afternoon Desaix's troops began to arrive, and Bonaparte gave the signal for a general counter-attack. Bessières and Eugène supported Gen Kellermann's cavalry charge against the Liechtenstein Dragoons and the cavalry of Gen Pilati; the Mounted Grenadiers drew their sabres and charged, overthrowing everyone in their way. Enemy cavalrymen surrounded Trumpeter Schmitt; he killed one, was wounded and had his trumpet smashed, but managed to cut his way out. Sergeant Lanceleur and Grenadiers Millet and Leroy each captured an Austrian flag. Melas' army was routed and scattered, and the 9,000 Austrian casualties were more than twice those suffered by the French.



Sabre of Gen Ordener of the Mounted Grenadiers of the Consular Guard (1799–1804). With its gilded guard and scabbard and gilt and blued decoration on the blade, this exceptional piece exemplifies the highest quality weapons typical of officers of the Consular and Imperial Guards. (Paris, Musée de l'Armée; © Musée de l'Armée, Dist. RMN / Emilie Cambier)

Expansion of the Guard, 1800–03

Once he had returned to France, Bonaparte reorganized his Guard. On 8 September 1800 he decreed that the cavalry would consist of three squadrons of Mounted Grenadiers and one of Mounted Chasseurs. Each squadron comprised two companies; each company had 1 captain, 1 first lieutenant, 1 second lieutenant, 1 sub-lieutenant, 1 sergeant-major, 4 sergeants, 1 quartermaster, 8 corporals, 2 trumpeters, 96 grenadiers and 1 farrier.

In December 1800, Gen Moreau's victory at Hohenlinden persuaded the Austrians to sue for peace, and a treaty was concluded on 9 February 1801. With Europe at peace for a while, and conscious of the importance of having a corps of troops under his personal command that could be employed as the ultimate reserve on the battlefield (as they had proved in Italy), Napoleon embarked on a continuing process of reorganizing his Guard on a massive scale.

Step by step it grew in importance, initially by decrees of 10 October and 14 November 1801. The latter gave the Cavalry of the Guard a commander-in-chief (Gen Bessières), and the Mounted Grenadiers and Chasseurs were both reorganized into full regiments, each commanded by a colonel, who got their orders from the general commanding the Cavalry of the Guard. Four months later, a new decree of 8 March 1802 brought the unit to full regimental strength with four squadrons of two companies each (but still with three squadron-leaders) and a regimental staff. The entire Consular Guard now comprised:

Guard Staff (general officers, ADCs, Inspectors and Commissaires des Guerres): 15 officers with 112 horses
Foot Grenadiers: 77 officers with 24 horses, and 1,623 men
Foot Chasseurs: 77 officers with 24 horses, and 1,623 men
Artillery with Park: 15 officers with 37 horses, and 199 men with 176 horses
Artillery Train: 3 officers with 7 horses, and 104 men with 120 horses
Mounted Grenadiers: 49 officers with 119 horses, and 927 men with 925 horses
Mounted Chasseurs: 33 officers with 57 horses, and 471 men with 469 horses
Medical Service: 12 officers
96 '*Enfants de troupe*'
Grand total: 281 officers with 380 horses, and 5,043 men with 1,690 horses

In May 1802, Napoleon Bonaparte was confirmed by referendum as First Consul of France for life. That autumn a new order augmented the regiment's establishment of company officers and NCOs, bringing the total for each company to 5 officers and 118 NCOs and grenadiers. The Mounted Grenadiers would now total 56 officers with 143 horses, and 959 men with 955 horses.

In mid-April 1803, in a note to the Minister of War, Napoleon instructed him to order muskets specially made for the Mounted Grenadiers; they were to be of a specific model, as fine as possible and of the same size as those of the Line Dragoons. A bayonet was needed, of such a pattern that when fixed to the muskets the Grenadiers would be able to manœuvre on foot in three ranks. Napoleon requested that he personally be sent several models of this musket and bayonet, as well as three models of sabre, for his consideration. These latter became the slightly curved sabre *à la Montmorency*, 97.5cm (38.4in) long, with a flared brass hilt incorporating a flaming grenade decoration. The beechwood grip was covered with parchment, and the wooden scabbard with laminated strips of leather and brass. The rings and chape (or drag) were of iron.

In the same note, Napoleon also ordered that when a soldier retired from the regiment to return to civil life he could keep his uniform and even his sabre. (For this latter, it was not specified whether the Mounted or Foot Grenadiers were meant, or both.)

Strength on 24 September 1803, the first day of An XII: 55 officers and 912 men.
During the previous year, An XI, the regiment had received 20 officers and 211 rankers. 1 officer and 91 men had retired or been sent on permanent leave; 8 officers and 123 men passed into other regiments; and 1 officer and 16 men were stricken from the rolls.

Horse drummer, Mounted Grenadiers of the Imperial Guard, full dress 1804–05, by Nicolas Hoffmann (see also Plate E2). When the Consulate became the Empire the imperial coat of arms replaced the Republican *fasces* on the drum banners and a trophy of musical instruments on the sabretache (see Plate B2). The initial burst of luxurious display in the uniforms of the Guard during the first years of the Empire was curbed by the introduction of stricter regulation. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, RI, USA; photo Massimo Fiorentino, 2001)

Mounted Grenadier Regiment of the Imperial Guard in full dress, 1804–05, by Hoffmann. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, RI, USA; photo Massimo Fiorentino, 2001)

The Lefèvre document

At some date in the Revolutionary Year XII (24 September 1803–23 September 1804) one Citizen Lefèvre, paymaster of the administrative region of the Department of the Oise, dedicated an overview of the organization and strength of the Consular Guard to the First Consul. Each service and regiment in the Guard was dealt with in detail. Strangely enough, he wrote that the Mounted Grenadiers and Chasseurs were each composed of a regimental staff and '2 squadrons of 4 companies each' instead of the correct '4 squadrons of 2 companies':

The staff consisted of 1 colonel with 10 horses, 3 squadron-leaders with 15 horses, 1 quarter-master with 3 horses, 1 captain instructor with 3 horses, 1 adjutant-major with 4 horses, 1 lieutenant sub-adjutant major with 3 horses, 1 sub-lieutenant sub-adjutant major with 3 horses, 2 lieutenant standard-bearers with 2 horses, 2 sub-lieutenant standard-bearers with 4 horses, 1 surgeon first class with 2 horses and 1 second class equally with 2 horses. (This undated manuscript must have predated 29 July 1804, since on that date the emperor decreed a new organization which mentions a major and four squadron-leaders on the regimental staff.) The staff NCOs were 1 assistant instructor sergeant with 1 horse, 1 *vaguemestre* sergeant with 1 horse, 1 veterinary with 1 horse, 1 trumpet-major with 1 horse, 1 assistant veterinary with 1 horse, 2 trumpet-corporals with 2 horses, 3 mounted master craftsmen with 3 horses, and 4 unmounted master craftsmen.

The eight companies collectively had 8 captains with 24 horses, 8 first lieutenants and 8 second lieutenants with 2 horses each, and 16 sub-lieutenants equally with 32 horses. The NCOs and troopers totalled 8 sergeant-majors, 48 sergeants, 8 quartermasters, 80 corporals, 768 grenadiers, 24 trumpeters and 8 farriers, all with one horse each. The regiment also had 2 wagons pulled by 8 horses. The regimental total was thus 56 officers with 143 horses, and 959 NCOs and troopers with 963 horses (1,015 all ranks, and 1,106 horses).

FROM CONSULAR GUARD TO IMPERIAL GUARD

On 18 May 1804 the Senate announced that the governance of the Republic was to be handed, for reasons of national security, to an Emperor of the French – the former General and First Consul Bonaparte. In due course this son of a lawyer from Ajaccio, Corsica, with some pretensions to the blood of Tuscan gentry, would take his crown from the hands of the hovering Pope and perform his own coronation. That same day the State Secretary, the Ministers, the Governor of the Palace and the generals of the Guard had to take the oath of loyalty to the emperor's person. On 13 August 1804, Napoleon wrote to Marshal Bessières asking whether all necessary measures had been taken to provide the uniforms of his new Imperial Guard with buttons showing the imperial eagle.

Five months later, in January 1805, six squadrons of the Guard cavalry commanded by the emperor's stepson Eugène de Beauharnais marched for Lyon, where they were to receive new instructions. They were ordered to pack away their full dress uniforms, and were warned that they would have to cross the Alps; their destination was Italy, where they would assist in Napoleon's coronation as King of Italy. The column consisted of 300 Mounted Chasseurs, 300 Mounted Grenadiers, 100 Mamelukes, 150 Gendarmes d'Élite and 50 men from the Guard Artillery. A second detachment, consisting of the Foot Guard, was to follow them.

On 21 March 1805 one of their bravest officers entered the regiment. Appointed colonel-major (i.e. the day-to-day commander in the absence of the colonel), Gen Lepic succeeded Col Oulié, who transferred to the Gendarmerie. (In the Guard, the rigid modern link between a rank and a regimental appointment did not exist. General officers were routinely appointed to the command or deputy command of a regiment. We are reminded of the contemporary practice in the British Household troops, whereby an officer held one rank in the Foot Guards, but a higher rank 'in the army'.)

Born on 20 September 1765, Louis Lepic had enlisted on 17 May 1781 in the Régiment de Lescure Dragons. By October 1792 he was a lieutenant-colonel, and then joined the 21st Line Chasseurs as a squadron-leader. He served against the Vendéens, during which operations he suffered his first wound in combat. From mid-1796 until 1801 Lepic and his regiment served with l'Armée d'Italie; at Pastrengo in March 1799 he suffered seven sabre wounds to his head and one to his shoulder, and took a bullet wound to his arm. In recognition of his exploits he was promoted colonel. Present at Marengo with his regiment, he took little part in the events of that day,

Mounted Grenadier in full dress, 1804–05, by Hoffmann. In contrast to the illustration on page 3, note that the aiguillettes here are worn on the right shoulder. The artist represented this trooper with a cylindrical portemanteau, although a rectangular shape is described by the dress regulations. Note also the musket slung outside the right leg; and the full-dress embellishments of scarlet ribbons at the horse's tail and right ear. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, RI, USA; photo Massimo Fiorentino, 2001)

***Chef de brigade* (colonel) of the Mounted Grenadiers, full dress,1804–05; see Plate A1. Note that Hoffmann shows no portemanteau behind the saddle. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, RI, USA; photo Massimo Fiorentino, 2001)**

Strength on 23 September 1804: 58 officers and 934 rankers.
During the previous year the regiment had received 3 officers and 102 men, and 1 man was commissioned within the regiment. 35 men were sent on permanent leave or were retired; 1 officer and 26 men passed into other regiments; 9 men died; and 9 were stricken from the rolls.

and indeed spend much of the next four years in various garrison towns, mainly in Italy. Another officer in his regiment was Napoleon's brother-in-law, the Italian Prince Borghèse, who was serving as a squadron-leader (he was eventually ordered to go to Boulogne, where Gen Ordener had to teach him the duties of an officer).

Regimental reputation

In Emile Marco de Saint-Hilaire's '*Histoire populaire de la Garde Impériale*' we read that:

> To the mounted grenadier of the Old Guard belonged the exclusive privilege of that character and that steadiness that distinguished him among all the other horsemen of the army. He was of tall stature and wore, as if it was a light hair-piece, the heavy bonnet of bearskin which, when he was on horseback, added still more to his height, making him even more imposing. His general facial expression was one of coldness. When he was on foot, this man preserved his practice of gravity. There was in his demeanour a kind of stiffness; his behaviour off-duty was less affected than that of the other soldiers of the Guard. He seemed to leave the matter of his personal dignity to the attention of those who praised it. Seldom surprised by the passing of a smile, he was always impassive; one might have believed that the pride in his quality was innate to his particular disposition, and that the mounted grenadier affected this pretension to supremacy which he wanted to exhibit... but one must not deceive oneself: this soldier was simply a man of his regiment. All those in his place were effected by a community of feelings and traditions: he had the honour to be a mounted grenadier of the Guard, and that was all.

The Mounted Grenadiers rode on big black horses bought in from the Norman countryside around Caen (though the future Young Guard squadrons would have brown mounts). These had full manes and tails, and for parades the chargers were prettied up with red ribbons braided in the forelock behind the ear and with red crupper rosettes (see Plates A2 & D2).

The regiment were nicknamed 'the Giants', 'the Gods', or simply *les Gros Talons*, 'the High Heels', from the size of their boots. For new candidates there were strict requirements: they had to be 176cm (5ft 9in) tall, with ten years' service, at least four campaigns and a citation for bravery (though members of the Legion of Honour were exempted from all other

requirements). Their food was good, and the wine even better. Discipline was strict, and the colonel sometimes had to intervene in rather personal matters. On 9 Brumaire An X (31 October 1801) Col Ordener wrote a regimental order:

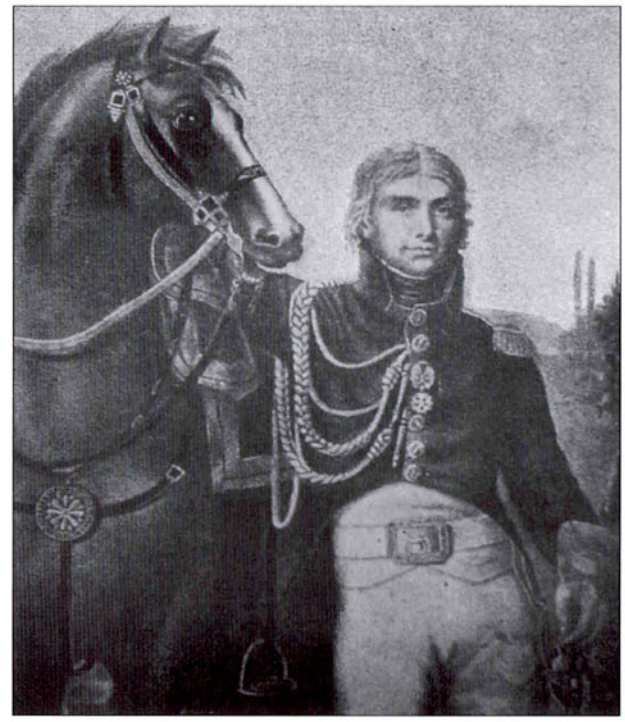
> I have been told that several soldiers spend much more than they can afford, and thus become victims of debts that they can only pay by means of severe economies. The places they visit are generally places of bad conduct and to be avoided. I engage them not to visit such places; by not doing so they will maintain their own good reputation and that of the regiment. The house of the woman Bonibar near the Ecole Militaire No.48 is known for its dangerous reputation, and is forbidden to all soldiers of the Cavalry of the Guard.

It was these Grenadiers who would now follow their emperor on his conquest of Europe – a march that started in autumn 1805, and ended on an early summer night in 1815.

1805: the Austerlitz campaign

On 28 August 1805, from the headquarters of the Grande Armée at the huge camps around Boulogne, Napoleon ordered Marshal Berthier to get the entire Guard plus his Italian Royal Guard on the march towards Strasbourg. Austria, Russia, Sweden and Naples had formed a Third Coalition against the Empire, and Napoleon was determined to smash its most important Austrian and Russian armies in a lightning campaign. Generals Hulin and Soulès commanded the 4,000 Guard infantry, while Gen Ordener led the 1,500-strong cavalry; the combined artillery of the French and Italian guards had 25 cannon. All colonels and lieutenant-colonels who were then on leave or on detached service with one of the households of the emperor, empress or of one of the imperial princes were to rejoin their regiments. To save time, officers recently commissioned into the Guard but still with their former regiments, or travelling between their old and new postings, were to make their way directly to Strasbourg where they would find their Guard regiments.

With the Mounted Grenadiers marching towards new fields of glory, the emperor decreed on 19 September the creation of a Corps of Mounted Vélites for the Guard cavalry, numbering 800 and divided into two squadrons each of four companies. Vélites translates roughly as 'probationers'; this term meant young volunteers from the wealthy classes whose families paid for them to serve. They would go on campaign divided between the Mounted Chasseurs and Mounted Grenadiers, whose companies would thus be augumented to about 125 rankers each, and in future the Vélites would enable the formation of a fifth squadron in each regiment.



Ferdinand Pierre Agathe Bourdon-Durocher (1773–1805), squadron-leader in the Mounted Grenadiers; he is portrayed in the *surtout*, with the Knight's Cross of the Legion of Honour – of which he was one of the earliest recipients after its creation in July 1805 – fixed to a buttonhole. Bourdon entered the Garde du Directoire as a sub-lieutenant in 1797, passing successively into the Consular and Imperial guards. He became colonel of the 11th Dragoons of the Line in 1805, was mortally wounded at Brünn on 2 December, and died of his wounds ten days later, aged 32.

For the march eastwards the Mounted Grenadiers – like their comrades of the Mounted Chasseurs – were organized into a brigade of two tactical *régiments de marche* each of three squadrons. With the 1st Marching Regiment rode the regimental commander, GenBrig Ordener, who took his son with him as ADC; the deputy regimental paymaster, two medical officers and two grenadiers probably serving as orderlies accompanied them – in all, five officers with 12 horses and two troopers with one horse each. The marching regiment itself numbered 21 officers with 41 horses and 385 rankers with 384 horses, comprising:

1st Squadron, under SqnLdrs Treuille and Rossignol, plus 2 captains, 2 first lieutenants and 2 second lieutenants.
2nd Squadron SqnLdr Clément plus 1 captain, 2 first lieutenants and 2 second lieutenants.
3rd Squadron SqnLdr Chamorin plus 1 captain, 2 first lieutenants and 3 second lieutenants.

The staff of the 2nd Marching Regiment in the brigade would normally be led by a 'second major'; as this function had only just been created (on 21 September 1805) the post was still vacant. The other members of the staff were Sub-adjutant-major Camperiol with two horses, and one trooper with a single horse. The regiment comprised:

4th Squadron, under SqnLdr Prince Borghèse, plus 2 captains, 2 first lieutenants and 3 second lieutenants.
5th Squadron SqnLdr Jolivet plus 1 captain, 2 first lieutenants and 3 second lieutenants.
6th Squadron SqnLdr Blancard plus 1 captain, 2 first lieutenants and 3 second lieutenants.

This marching regiment totalled 22 officers with 40 horses, and 384 troopers with 384 horses. The entire Mounted Grenadier regiment stood at 8 staff officers, 43 squadron officers (2 missing – the second major, and the second ADC to whom Gen Ordener was entitled) with 100 horses, and 774 troopers with 773 horses. The regiment was followed by a number of support vehicles pulled by 42 draught horses.

On 29 September the emperor wrote to Eugène that hostilities had opened. The entire Guard, 8,000 strong, was present at Strasbourg and ready to cross the Rhine on 1 October. Ten days later they would be at Augsburg, and on the 28th – after an advance of dazzling speed served by superb logistics – the Grande Armée forced the encircled Austrian army of Gen Mack to surrender at Ulm. At Austerlitz, on 2 December, the Tsar's elite cavalry were routed during Napoleon's crushing victory over the combined Russian and Austrian armies under Kutusov. When the Grand Duke Constantine's Russian Imperial Guard inflicted heavy casualties during an advance against Marshal Soult's left-wing infantry on the Pratzen

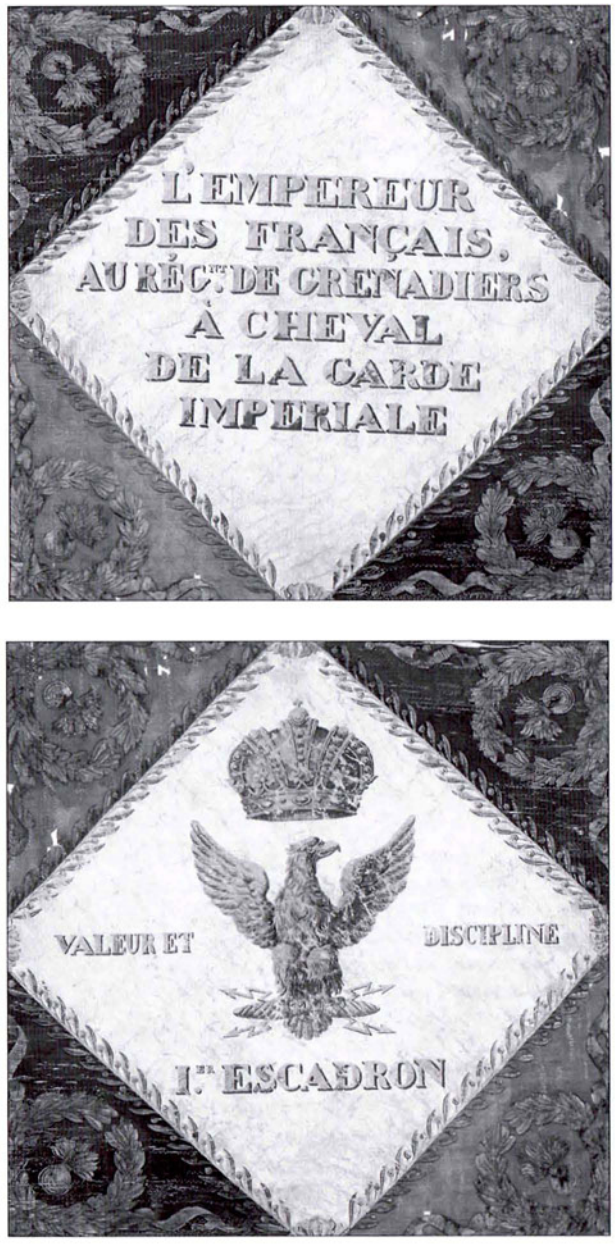
Strength on 23 September 1805: 54 officers and 908 men.
During the previous year the regiment had received 3 officers and 95 rankers. 2 officers and 89 men retired; 3 officers and 9 men passed into other regiments; 9 men died; and 2 officers and 14 men were stricken from the rolls.

Heights, Napoleon ordered his ADC Gen Rapp to take two squadrons each of the Mounted Grenadiers and Mounted Chasseurs plus the Mamelukes of the Guard, and drive them back. The Mounted Grenadiers were on the left of Rapp's charge to disengage the 4th Line Infantry Regiment, which was under attack by the Russian Chevalier Guards. With a shout of 'Let the ladies of St Petersburg weep!' they charged into this aristocratic Russian corps; the fight was sharp but short, and the Guard cavalry pushed the Russians back and surrounded them, capturing their commander Prince Repnin and his staff. In the Bulletin of the Grande Armée of 11 December 1805, Lieutenants Menager and Rollet of the Mounted Grenadiers were mentioned as being wounded. Austerlitz wrote the death warrant of the Third Coalition, and the birth certificate of Napoleon's new satellite Confederation of the Rhine in Germany.

1806–07: the Jena-Eylau campaign

On 1 February 1806 the regimental strength was as follows: present in Paris (Ecole Militaire), 10 officers and 111 troopers; in hospital, 8 grenadiers; serving with the army, 44 officers and 788 rankers. The regiment's official establishment strength was 1,017 men but their actual strength was only 961 men, a shortfall of 56, and only 832 were present with the unit in the field. On 1 March there were 55 officers and 663 troopers in Paris, with another 32 grenadiers in hospital; additionally, 12 officers and 99 Vélites were now serving with them, and consequently the emperor thought it necessary to reorganize the structure of the regiments that had received them. On 15 April 1806, Napoleon decreed that the Mounted Grenadiers would be composed of a regimental staff, four squadrons of two companies each, plus a fifth squadron of Vélites. This latter received a staff of a squadron-leader,an adjutant-major, a sub-adjutant-major, a veterinary and a trumpet-corporal.

On 20 May 1806, Gen Frédéric Louis Henri Walther (see Plate D1) replaced Gen Ordener as regimental commander of the Mounted Grenadiers of the Guard. Born in Alsace in 1761 and enlisted in May 1781 in the ranks of the famous Bercheny Hussars (later retitled the 1er Régiment des Hussards), Walther was an experienced veteran who had seen action at Neerwinden, on the Piave river in Italy, at Pfullendorf, Stockach, Moesskirch, Ulm, Hohenlinden and Hollabrun,



Obverse and reverse of the standard of the 1st Squadron, 1804 model, made by the famous Maison Picot; the eagle, lettering and corner decorations are painted onto the silk in gold. The banner is 60cm (23.6 in) square; on both sides the blue corners are at the upper hoist and lower fly, the red corners at lower hoist and upper fly. Another standard, of the 2nd Squadron, also survives, and is today in the Musée de l'Empéri in Salon-de-Provence. (Paris, Musée de l'Armée; © Musée de l'Armée, Dist. RMN / Pascal Segrette)

Trumpeter in full dress, 1804–06. This parade uniform dated from around 1801 and stayed in use until 1808–09. Hoffmann represents horizontal pockets; in reality, these were both set on vertically, and false, being simulated with crimson braid bordered with a gold stripe. The hat is trimmed with tricolour feathers, and the plume is crimson with a white tip instead of fully white. Another peculiarity is that the trumpet banner shows a central gold grenade; at around the time this drawing was made they normally carried a gold crowned spread eagle in the Polish style, and a gold grenade in each corner. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University, Providence, RI, USA; photo Massimo Fiorentino, 2001)

and who had commanded a Dragoon division in Marshal Murat's Cavalry Reserve at Austerlitz. On 1 September 1806 his regiment in Paris totalled 74 officers and 870 rankers, plus 39 men in hospital; the Vélites had their barracks at Versailles, where they numbered another 11 officers and 124 Vélites, with 8 men in hospital.

Russia was still sullenly determined to avenge Austerlitz, and in autumn 1806 she joined Prussia and Saxony (with, as usual, British funding) in a Fourth Coalition, provoked in the case of Prussia and Saxony by the formation of the Confederation of the Rhine. On 19 September, Gen Bessières was instructed to leave with his staff for Mainz, where he was to organize the Guard for a new campaign. The entire Guard was to leave barracks in such a way that on the evening of 21 September the only guardsmen to be found in the capital were those assigned to guard the empress. For the march the Mounted Grenadiers were again divided into two elements, totalling 1,200 men. However, events outran the advance of the Guard cavalry, who were unable to join up with the rest of the army in time for the first major battle against the Prussians. Marching from Manheim, the whole Guard cavalry arrived at Wurzburg on 8 October, but only reached Napoleon at Naumbourg on the 18th. Four days previously, at Jena and nearby Auerstaedt, the Grande Armée had wiped away forever the humiliation of France's defeat by Frederick the Great at Rossbach in November 1757. Reunited with the emperor, the Guard cavalry followed him to Posen and Thorn, where they arrived on 18 December 1806.

Prussia was completely prostrate, but there was still an unbeaten Russian army in front of the French. Napoleon's army overran Prussia and advanced into Poland, where they took up their winter quarters in impoverished territory, hoping to recuperate from a victorious but exhausting campaign. In bitter weather they lacked food, shoes and warm clothing, and even the privileged Guard was not spared from this misery. To ease their hardships the emperor, staying in Warsaw, ordered that on the first day of each month an extra allowance was to be given to the Guard regiments; the Mounted Grenadiers would receive an extra 4,000 francs. Additionally, they received 1,200 francs to buy large cooking pots, and another 4,000 francs to buy new wagons and draught horses and to repair all necessary material. The Mounted Grenadiers, like the Mounted Chasseurs, received eight wagons; two were reserved for the officers' belongings, two for spare horseshoes and saddlery, and four to transport rations, for which the emperor allowed another 6,000 francs. The regiment was able to have 860 shirts, 200 coats and 200 portemanteaux made up, and received enough canvas to make 2,000 sacks for the distribution of rations.

In January 1807 the Russian forces of Gen Bennigsen attempted to surprise the French and left their winter quarters on the Baltic coast to advance into Prussia. Napoleon marched north from Warsaw to meet them, and on 7 February his 50,000 men caught up with the retreating Bennigsen,

with 67,000 troops, near the village of Preussische-Eylau. Neither army was complete, and both were urgently awaiting reinforcements: Bennigsen from 10,000 Prussians, and Napoleon from the separated corps of Ney and Davout. After indecisive fighting on the first day, on 8 February – in deep snow and a cutting wind – the Russians opened a fierce bombardment and mounted heavy attacks on both of Napoleon's flanks. The Guard cavalry were in the left centre, behind the Guard infantry, where the Mounted Grenadiers had to sit their horses patiently, in falling snow and under a hellish fire from the Russian artillery. They probably ducked their heads to keep the stinging wind and snow out of their eyes, but they were told by their ColMaj Lepic to 'Hold their heads up, for God's sake – cannonballs aren't turds!'.

When Napoleon ordered Marshal Augereau's VII Corps in the centre to advance, they became blinded and disoriented by the blown snow and were cut to pieces. At this moment of maximum danger the emperor gave Marshal Murat the order to advance to save the situation with his Reserve Cavalry Corps of some 10,700 men – about 80 squadrons. After initial success Murat's regiments became cut off behind the re-forming Russian centre, and it was time for the Guard to be committed in a last throw of the dice. Supporting the Guard infantry, the two cavalry regiments mounted several charges. They broke through the enemy lines, but the Mounted Grenadiers were still in the Russian rear while the enemy mounted a counter-attack, and they became surrounded by the Tsar's cavalry and Cossacks. When the Russians called on them to surrender, Lepic is said to have responded, 'Take a look at these faces, and see if they want to surrender!'– then he shouted to his Grenadiers 'Follow me!', and set off at the gallop back through enemy lines.

***'Heads up, for God's sake! Cannonballs aren't turds!'* – ColMaj Lepic at the battle of Eylau, 8 February 1807. Edouard Détaille's famous painting shows the grenadiers wearing grey overalls, although these were only provided to the regiment in 1813; another classic error is showing the trumpeter wearing a white bearskin. (Chantilly, Musée Condé; © RMN / René-Gabriel Ojéda)**

Strength on 1 January 1807: 80 officers and 1,071 rankers. During An XIV the regiment had received 39 officers and 353 men, and 7 men were commissioned within the regiment. One officer – Gen Ordener – left it to become a Senator; 17 officers and 79 men passed into other regiments; 16 men passed into the Veterans of the Imperial Guard, and 2 officers went to the hospital of the Guard (medical officers?). One Grenadier went to the Special Military School at Fontainebleau, and 51 retired; 15 Grenadiers died, two in combat and 13 in hospital. 17 men were sent back to their former regiments, and 14 were stricken from the rolls.

Three officers were killed and 13 Grenadiers together with Lepic wounded, and 143 horses were left on the snow-covered field. One of the officers who died was Capt Hypolite Auzouy, who refused to be carried to the Guard's ambulances. On 11 May 1807, Napoleon agreed that Auzouy's father should be granted an annual pension of 1,200 francs backdated to 8 February; this was an example of the emperor looking after the wellbeing of the parents and children of his officers who were killed in battle and left their families without an income.

DISPERSED DEPLOYMENTS, 1807–11

After three campaigns in about two years the Guard needed reinforcements. From his headquarters at Tilsitt, Napoleon decreed on 8 July that the Line cavalry regiments should provide 750 troopers for the cavalry of the Guard, of whom 200 were to go to the Mounted Grenadiers. As a token of his esteem the emperor also granted 400 crosses of the Legion of Honour to the NCOs and troopers of his Guard. These coveted decorations would add a splash of colour to their chests during their victory parade into Paris on 25 November 1807, and at the banquets, balls and receptions for the victorious Guard that were organized over many days on the explicit instructions of the emperor himself.

Late in 1807, in an undated report from Marshal Bessières informing the emperor about the present situation of the Imperial Guard, he wrote regarding the Mounted Grenadiers that – without counting a detachment of 150 men sent to Bordeaux – the regiment had 852 men present, and 800 horses in good condition and ready to march. Repairs to saddles, equipment and uniforms were in hand but would not be completed before 15 December. The regiment had 640 men serving at the Quartier Napoléon, 200 at the Quay Bonaparte, and the rest at Sèvres and Versailles.

1808: Spain

With Prussia, Russia and Austria 'pacified', Napoleon's attention turned towards the unstable and tempting military and political situation in Spain. Beyond that country, in whose quarrelsome and corrupt court and government he had been meddling busily, lay Britain's ally and loyal trading partner Portugal. To get at Portugal the French had to march across Spain, where their road had been prepared by diplomatic trickery.

In different échelons, the Guard marched towards Bordeaux and Bayonne in February 1808. One of these detachments was composed of two battalions of Foot Chasseurs (1,200 men) commanded by Gen Friederichs, six guns, the Polish Lancers, plus a squadron each of Mounted Chasseurs, Mounted Grenadiers and Dragoons. In addition to these squadrons, each 200 strong, the column included 160 Gendarmes d'Élite. They were supposed to be at Bayonne on 1 March and were expected in Vittoria around 8–10 March. This first contingent of the Guard was expected to arrive at Burgos around the 14th–15th of the month; a second column, including Fusiliers and several detachments of cavalry, were to

reach Bordeaux on 20 March. In the meantime, in France, the regiment received new soldiers from the Line regiments of Cuirassiers and Carabiniers, which each had to provide ten men.

The 'invasion by stealth' aroused the furious resentment of many of the Spanish people, however, and on 2 May 1808 the inhabitants of Madrid rose in violent revolt against the French occupiers (one of their victims was Surgeon-Major Gauthier of the Mounted Grenadiers). Uprisings ripped across the country, and after the defeat of Gen Dupont at Baylen in July the new puppet King of Spain, the emperor's brother Joseph, was forced to flee his capital. Napoleon gathered his Grande Armée in front of the Pyrenees and prepared to cross the Spanish border in person; he was followed by his Guard, each cavalry regiment again being divided into two *régiments de marche*. The main army entered Spain on 4 November and Madrid on 8 December, and on the 20th of that month Napoleon marched north-west to drive Gen John Moore's British expeditionary army back to the embarkation ports of Vigo and Corunna. He had to leave this task to Marshal Soult, however, as news of yet another Austrian mobilization arrived at his headquarters. Napoleon returned to Paris in haste, ordering his Guard to follow (though each cavalry regiment except the Polish Lancers was to leave one squadron or two companies in Spain). From early March 1809, Guard detachments left Spain in large columns for France, where they were newly equipped and, after a short rest, they left for Germany.

Portrait of a Vélite of the Mounted Grenadiers by J.H. Hesse, dated 1810. This young man, whose wealthy family paid an annual fee for him to be admitted to the ranks of the regiment as an officer candidate, wears an immense bicorn hat with a cockade loop in heavy gold bullion cord, fit for a senior officer; his aiguillettes and epaulettes also show higher quality than usual. The portrait also shows us the shorter tails of the uniform in comparison to those of the Foot Grenadiers. His ranker's sabre is of the second model, and is worn with a white leather swordknot. The gloves are a personal addition, more of light-cavalry style than those worn by the heavy cavalry (*à crispin*). (Picture & collection of J.N., France)

1809: Essling and Wagram

On 21 March a Guard detachment commanded by Gen Arrighi left Paris for Strasbourg, with orders to arrive on 15 April. It consisted of 35 officers with 79 horses, 738 men with 654 horses, and a large number of vehicles pulled by 203 draught horses. Of these, 8 officers and 203 men were from the Mounted Grenadiers, who were at Verdun on 1 April. With nearly the whole Imperial Guard on the move Napoleon wished to check every detail, and at 2am on the night of 23/24 March he asked his brilliant chief-of-staff Berthier where the different Guard detachments were at that moment. Berthier was not above showing off his complete mastery of his brief; using the same sheet of paper that he had received from Napoleon, and timing his reply also at 2am, he reported that at that moment 560 Guard Dragoons were at Bordeaux, 598 Mounted Grenadiers at Barras, and 250 Gendarmes d'Élite with 250 artillerymen plus 390 horses with 12 guns at Bazas.

The Mounted Grenadiers were to play a largely passive role in the costly battles on the Danube that followed. At Essling (21–22 May), where the firepower of the Austrian artillery overwhelmed the French army, the emperor was very much exposed when the loyal Gen Walther warned him that he would order his Mounted Grenadiers to take the emperor off the field by force; Napoleon left without saying a word. At Wagram (5–6 July) the regiment was held in reserve. In late October 1809, when

In 1810 the Henschel brothers produced a series of 12 plates (*'Les Gardes Impérial Royales de l'Armée francaise'*) showing troops of the French army that had occupied Berlin. These finely detailed studies of field uniforms include this Mounted Grenadier, wearing the single-breasted *surtout* uniform. Note that although on dismounted sentry duty he still wears his sword-and-bayonet belt at the waist rather than over his right shoulder. (Collection Markus Stein – Markus Gärtner)

Strength on 1 January 1808: 78 officers and 1,125 rankers.
During 1807 the regiment had received 8 officers and 275 men, while 4 men were commissioned officers within the regiment. 6 officers and 47 men had passed into other regiments, and 2 to the Special Military School at Fontainebleau. 2 officers and 4 men retired; 4 men were sent on leave; 8 passed into the Veterans of the Imperial Guard, and 24 Grenadiers were returned to their former regiments. Casualties in that year were 5 officers and 86 men killed or died from wounds and 31 men died from illness; 1 officer and 11 men were stricken from the rolls.

the peace talks following his victory were completed, Napoleon ordered the Guard back to Paris. The generals were allowed to travel separately, while Maj Chastel commanded the Mounted Grenadiers on the road.

1810–11: rotations and paperwork

Once back in his capital, the emperor considered returning to Spain, where his marshals' campaigns to hold down Spanish regional armies and a widespread guerrilla resistance were dragging on frustratingly, encouraged by British gold and Wellington's small army in Portugal. On 5 December 1809 he wrote to the Minister of War that the Guard should get ready to begin a new campaign in the Peninsula. He divided his Guard into three divisions, of which the first one should be at Chartres on 13 December. Commanded by Gen Roguet, this division was composed of one squadron of Polish Lancers, one of Mounted Chasseurs with the company of Mamelukes, one of Dragoons and one of Mounted Grenadiers. With this 600-strong cavalry force marched 3,200 infantry, plus eight guns and all supporting services. The 2nd Division, commanded by Gen Dumoustier, was equally composed of mixed cavalry and infantry, and was to leave on 16 December, while the 3rd Division containing the rest of the Guard had to be ready on 1 January 1810. In all, a total of 19,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry with 84 guns were to be commanded by Marshal Bessières.

In fact, during their second tour of duty in the Peninsula the Mounted Grenadiers saw little action before being recalled to France, and by mid-December 1810 they were already leaving. On the 18th of that month there were already 1,087 Grenadiers under Gen Chastel's command in Paris, of whom 34 were in hospital, while only 182 were still in Spain with Gen Lepic. To fill the ranks they needed 80 more men; these were sought within the Cuirassiers and Carabiniers of the Line, of which each regiment except the 7th and 13th Cuirassiers had to provide six men.

Early in 1810 Gen Walther complained that he lacked good experienced NCOs to serve in his Mounted Grenadiers. In his letter he mentioned four Line cavalry sergeants who were the best instructors serving at the riding school at Versailles, and who would be fit candidates for his regiment. However, two of their parent regiments were down to one instructor each, and these NCOs had promised that when their two years' service at the school was up they would return rather than passing into a Guard regiment. Napoleon replied that when the Guard claimed these instructors then Minister of War Clarke would just have to provide other instructors for their Line regiments. (This incident, of the head of state concerning himself over the postings of four NCOs, is a typical example of Napoleon's obsessive attention to military detail.)

With some Guard cavalry detachments serving in Spain, the emperor would take the opportunity to see that some of his newer guardsmen could get some battle experience. On 25 April 1810 he wrote to Bessières that he wanted to increase the numbers of the Guard cavalry in Spain by sending them Vélites with the least campaign experience.

Except for Spain and Portugal, 1811 saw a continued relative peace in mainland Europe, and the time was ripe to pay some attention to the officers and men of the regiment. On 9 January, Gen Walther asked the Minister of War for two commissions to major in the Line for two of his captains; Clarke replied that there were no vacancies, and that four recently promoted majors were already serving *à la suite* (i.e. as supernumeraries) in the Line. On 11 January 1811, the regiment totalled 1,185 NCOs and troopers of whom 111 were Vélites. On 9 March, 53 officers, NCOs and troopers were admitted into the Legion of Honour. In the regiment, all the squadron-leaders, most of the captains and two lieutenants were Officers in the Legion of Honour; all the other officers proudly wore the Knight's cross of the Legion, as did most of the NCOs. (During the promotion of 14 June 1804, 73 sergeants, corporals and grenadiers had received the cross; on 26 August 1805, 36; on 14 March 1806, no fewer than 124; and on 14 April 1807, 38 of these rankers.)

From 1 July 1811 no further Vélites were allowed into the cavalry regiments of the Guard except for the 2nd Lancers (Red Lancers). The Vélites already serving in the Guard regiments could stay in their corps until they received a commission in the Guard or Line cavalry regiments, and this was confirmed by a decree of 1 August 1811. Later on, and probably still thinking of sending Vélites to Spain, Napoleon asked Marshal Mortier how many of them had not served at Wagram. Mortier replied that for the Guard cavalry as a whole there were 48, all of them present in Paris. It was 6 August before 30 Vélites of the Mounted Grenadiers were ready to receive some of the 54 commissions to sub-lieutenant in the 3e, 4e and 5e Bataillons de Marche of l'Armée du Midi in Spain. (Vélites who had served in the regiment for less than one year were not allowed to wear the aiguillette or bearskin, and were not allowed to serve in the emperor's escorts, except for those who were serving in Spain. This would remain the case until 1 January 1812; by that date the serving Vélites were to be dispersed between the squadrons, raising their number to five squadrons each of 250 men.)

Other administrative enquiries yield some interest, such as that made to Marshal Mortier in August 1811. He was to report how many soldiers in the Guard had participated in the Egyptian and Italian campaigns. Each regiment supplied well-detailed lists, and in Gen Walther's report one finds a total of 92 Mounted Grenadiers of all ranks who had served in one or both campaigns. (Other statistics of some value include returns showing that on 1 January 1810 a total of 2,754 members of the Imperial Guard were in hospital; between that date and 1 January 1811, 18,665 guardsmen entered a hospital, 19,031 left one, and 1,007 had died there.)

Mounted Grenadiers in campaign dress, by Edouard Détaille. Fixed to the portemanteau at right, note a bicorn hat protected by a white-and-blue ticking cover.

Striking portrait of a sergeant, proudly wearing his Knight's Cross of the Legion of Honour and sporting a fashionable 'Titus' haircut. He wears his full dress uniform; note forearm rank stripe, ranker's sword belt plate in plain brass embossed with a large grenade, and the details of his bearskin – the cross on the scarlet top patch, the cord and the pompon-style cockade. (Picture & collection of J.N., France)

RUSSIA

Early in January 1812, with a major campaign being planned, the cavalry of the Guard were in need of fresh horses. The Dragoons, Mounted Chasseurs and Mounted Grenadiers needed 361 remounts between them, of which 60 were for the Grenadiers. These were available at the remount depot in Hanover, and a dismounted Guard cavalry detachment was sent to Germany to collect them; the Mounted Grenadiers sent 1 captain, 1 lieutenant sub-adjutant-major, 2 sergeants, 4 corporals, 1 trumpeter and 53 grenadiers. Together with other Guard detachments, they assembled at Compiègne and left for Hanover on 23 January, commanded by a squadron-leader and with their saddles and equipment loaded into two wagons; they arrived exactly a month later.

On 27 January 1812, Napoleon asked for Bessières' advice. He wrote that Gen Walther commanded the Mounted Grenadiers and Gens Lepic and Chastel were serving as his majors, but did Lepic want a command as a divisional general in the heavy cavalry of the Line? He continued:

> Since my Mounted Grenadiers charge rarely, he [Lepic] will get experience in the Line, and then I can call him back to command the regiment when Gen Walther retires from it. Go and see him and talk about it... They say that Gen Chastel is talented. Commanding a cavalry brigade would give him experience. When Generals Lepic and Chastel pass into the Line, which brigade-generals or colonels could I give commissions as major in the Mounted Grenadiers?

In the event Gen Lepic stayed, but Chastel left on 26 April 1812, and was replaced by Gen Exelmans on 9 July.

One by one, Guard columns left France and marched eastwards. The infantry of the Guard was organized into three divisions, while the five cavalry regiments had a combined strength of 5,000 horses. During the march Gen Walther took command of the entire Guard cavalry and light artillery. Carrying only one Eagle with them, the Mounted Grenadiers marched towards Wurzburg, where they arrived on 4 April; the next stop would be Dresden, where Napoleon would meet the Austrian emperor and the allied sovereigns of Europe. On 5 April the remaining cavalry of the Guard in Paris – with the exception of smaller detachments still on the road from Spain – left the capital. Those that had arrived at Glogau before 15 May were ordered on the 21st to leave that town for Posen by echelons on 23, 24 and 25 May. On 12 or 13 June they were at Heilsberg.

After crossing the Niemen from Poland into Russia the Guard started the long march towards Moscow, and – though always held in reserve – both men and horses suffered casualties from the climate, the terrain, exhaustion, and lack of adequate food and clean water. At the Moscowa (the battle of Borodino), they witnessed one of the greatest spectacles of

Guard detachments serving in Spain, 20 July 1811
Mounted Chasseurs: 2 sqn-ldrs, of which 1 Mameluke; 3 captains, 15 lieutenants, and 293 NCOs, Chasseurs, Vélites and Mamelukes
Dragoons: 1 major, 1 sqn-ldr, 1 sub-adjutant major, 2 captains, 4 first lieutenants, 4 second lieutenants, and 273 NCOs, Dragoons and Vélites
Mounted Grenadiers: 1 major, 1 sqn-ldr, 2 captains, 4 first lieutenants, 3 second lieutenants, and 179 NCOs, Grenadiers and Vélites
1st Chevau-légers Lanciers (Polish Lancers): 1 major, 1 sqn-ldr, 1 captain adjutant-major, 2 first lieutenant sub-adjutant majors, 4 captains, 10 first lieutenants, 8 second lieutenants, and 333 NCOs and Lancers
Mounted Artillery: 1 major, 1 captain commandant, 2 first lieutenants, 2 second lieutenants, and 151 NCOs and troopers
Foot Artillery, Old Guard: 2 lieutenants and 7 gunners
Foot Artillery, Young Guard: 3 captains commandant, 2 second captains, 3 first lieutenants, 2 second lieutenants, and 254 NCOs and gunners
Artillery Train: 1 captain commandant, 2 lieutenants, 5 sub-lieutenants, and 493 NCOs and soldiers

carnage of the entire Napoleonic Wars. Their entry into the Russian capital, set on fire to receive them, brought some rest and comfort, but not the negotiated peace they had hoped for. In Moscow most of the Guard was used to keep discipline in and around the city; ten Mounted Grenadier patrols, together with an equal force of Dragoons, patrolled the streets and suburbs in order to round up any remaining Russian soldiers and to keep order. The rest of the regiment was quartered in the Kremlin.

(At around this time back in France, the Minister of War wrote to the emperor with a request from a Monsieur Martin Dumaigneau, inspector of the *Haras* – a state stud farm – at Pompadour, and father of eight children, of whom two sons were serving in the army. With only his salary to support his large family, Dumaigneau asked to stop paying the annuity for his son who was a Vélite in the Mounted Grenadiers. This young man, also called Martin, had already servived for five years and three months and in four campaigns, and was now with his regiment in Russia. This request probably never reached the emperor, nor do we know whether Vélite Dumaigneau survived the horrors of the retreat to come.)

Aware that his army would starve if it tried to over-winter in Moscow, and frustrated of the peace negotiations upon which he had counted, Napoleon planned to return closer to the Polish border. To protect his lines of communication and to reinforce his troops, he ordered his Minister of War in Paris to organise a Guard cavalry *régiment de marche* of some 600–700 men. On 25 October 1812 – a few days after the Grande Armée left Moscow on its planned 'orderly' withdrawal westwards – the Mounted Grenadiers barracks in Paris had 4 officers with 8 horses and 76 troopers with 73 horses. Also serving in the regiment, but unavailable, were 6 officers with 36 horses and 55 troopers with 70 horses. At Sèvres there were 29 grenadiers with an equal number of horses, while 4 troopers were in hospital and 2 on leave. In total, 204 men with 219 horses were serving in France.

The story of the disastrous retreat from Moscow needs no retelling here. When it began, the Mounted Grenadiers seem still to have been in good strength, with about 71 officers and 1,118 rankers (see document of 5 January 1813, quoted below under 'Rebuilding the Army'). They followed the emperor, and on 7 November they clashed with a band of

marauding Cossacks commanded by Platov. Chlapowski recalls in his memoirs: 'Then appeared the Mounted Grenadiers, in line formation. This line of black horses, its tall riders also in black bearskins, so impressed the Cossacks that they disappeared into the forest'. It was not until they reached the Berezina that the regiment suffered its first officer casualty – Lt Legrand, severely wounded, died from his injuries on 13 December. Lieutenant Audeval was killed before Vilnius on 10 December, and finally, on 13 December before Kovno, Lts Bergeret and Coffinal both received mortal wounds.

Proof that orders were given to send all available troops to Germany even before Napoleon had returned can be found in the rolls of 8 December 1812. Just 90 men were now serving in Paris, though with 213 horses. Each day 28 grenadiers went to guard the Tuileries palace, while 25 men patrolled the streets of the capital and another 15 would serve as an escort to the empress when she was in town. At around the same time, aware of the implications of the Russian campaign, SqnLdr Hardy commanding the regimental depot asked permission to admit into the regiment such troopers from Line Dragoon and Line Mounted Chasseurs regiments who had the required height.

On 5 December, days before the retreating army had reached the Polish border, Napoleon had abandoned his surviving troops in the hands of his brother-in-law Marshal Murat, and returned to Paris to begin attempting to rebuild the shattered Grande Armée. (Murat in his turn deserted them six weeks later, leaving command to Eugène de Beauharnais and fleeing to the milder climate of his Kingdom of Naples.) To rebuild the Guard, Napoleon needed NCOs and officers; he therefore repeatedly asked Berthier and Eugène to send all unmounted officers back to their garrisons or to Mainz. He estimated that the Mounted Grenadiers still numbered some 800 men with perhaps 400 horses.

REBUILDING THE REGIMENT

The surviving records of the sheer hard, detailed work that was needed to reconstruct the Mounted Grenadiers of the Guard after the retreat from Russia are worth summarizing, since most accounts simply pass over this period with a brief comment that 'somehow Napoleon managed to rebuild the decimated Grande Armée'.

Early in January 1813 priority was given to creating at least two fully equipped squadrons, and the responsibiity fell to Gen Lefèbvre-Desnouettes. On 3 January he had, in Paris, 219 men, of whom just 110 were available, and 209 horses at the depot, of which 150 were ready for immediate service. The two squadrons thus had a shortfall of 390 men and 350 horses, and another 300 mounts were also needed for the fit but dismounted men with the remnants of the Grande Armée near the Vistula. The horses had to be blacks, 4 to 5 years old; the Gendarmerie d'Élite were therefore requested to stop buying black horses for themselves. There was another source of mounts. During Napoleon's return from Russia a Gen de Malet had led a failed Republican coup d'état, and as a consequence of the weak resistance put up by the Parisian Guard that organization was disbanded, giving the army access to some 3,000 horses, of which 600 went to the Mounted Grenadiers.

There was only one place that seasoned soldiers could be found at short notice: the French Army of Spain, where 30 cavalry regiments were serving. Each of them had to send five soldiers with at least eight years' service and five with at least four years' service. These 300 men were to be divided between the different cavalry regiments of the Guard.

On 5 January 1813 a very detailed roll was drawn up listing the regiment's supposed status on that day, in terms of men in Paris who were 'available' for combat service and men who were on the strength but 'unavailable' for various reasons, and the numbers who were serving with the field army. The problem with this document was that the last roll from the regiment in the field had been received just before the retreat from Moscow had started (1 October 1812), so by 5 January 1813 these latter figures were well out of date – though they are still valuable in telling us retrospectively the strength at Moscow before the retreat:

> Of the regimental staff, 7 unavailable officers and 9 unavailable rankers were in Paris, while 24 officers and 13 rankers were serving with the army.
> The 1st Company had in Paris 1 officer and 9 rankers, 17 unavailable rankers and 2 in hospital, plus 4 officers and 102 rankers with the army. The other company of 1st Squadron, 6th Co, had 14 available and 3 unavailable rankers in Paris, plus 5 officers and 113 rankers with the army.
> In 2nd Sqn, the 2nd Co had in Paris 16 available and 3 unavailable rankers, plus 6 officers and 111 rankers with the army. 7th Company had 15 available and 5 unavailable rankers in Paris, plus 6 officers and 110 rankers with the army.
> In 3rd Sqn, 3rd Co had in Paris 1 available officer and 10 rankers and 9 unavailable rankers plus 1 in hospital, plus 4 officers and 109 rankers with the army. 8th Company had in Paris 1 officer and 5 rankers available, 11 unavailable rankers and 1 on leave, plus 4 officers and 112 rankers with the army.
> In 4th Sqn, 4th Co had in Paris 9 available and 4 unavailable rankers, plus 2 in hospital, and 5 officers and 114 rankers with the army. 9th Company had in Paris 1 officer and 10 rankers available, 6 unavailable rankers and 2 in hospital, plus 4 officers and 111 rankers with the army.
> In 5th Sqn, 5th Co had in Paris 8 available and 10 unavailable rankers plus 1 on leave, and 4 officers and 110 rankers with the army. 10th Company had in Paris 14 available and 3 unavailable rankers, plus 5 officers and 112 rankers with the army.

This gave a notional strength of 82 officers and 1,316 men; there were also 19 pupil-trumpeters (*élèves trompettes*) in Paris. Soon, however, the real situation became known, when the names of those posted missing during the retreat had been deleted from the rolls. The situation was much worse than it had been in 1807, when the Guard cavalry regiments returning from the Polish campaign had to be re-equipped in Paris before marching off to Spain. Now the regiment almost had to be rebuilt from scratch, with men, mounts, uniforms and equipment. Before undertaking this task the Guard administration had to check all financial accounts to see what was left to fund the re-equipment of the regiments.

Original uniform of a *brigadier* – corporal – of the Old Guard Mounted Grenadiers; the two forearm stripes are in *aurore* colour. Although their uniform was at first sight rather simple in comparison with those of the other cavalry regiments of the Imperial Guard, the 'Gods' spent large sums on their clothing and equipment. For example, in contrast to the headdress of the Imperial Guard infantry, for which goatskin was also used at the end of the Empire, the Mounted Grenadiers refused to accept anything less than genuine bearskin. (Paris, Musée de l'Armée; © Musée de l'Armée, Dist. RMN / Pascal Segrette)

For the Mounted Grenadiers the result was shocking but, as the senior regiment of the Guard cavalry, no expense was spared. Their uniforms were made by Bosquet, a master-tailor, their bearskins by Maillard of the Rue Saint-Honoré and their tall boots by Fabritzius; it was said that the trumpeters' hats were of a quality fit for a general. Scrutiny of the regimental accounts in comparison with those of the other regiments shows striking discrepancies. On 1 January 1811, the regiment paymaster had had 40,841 francs in hand, while the Mounted Chasseurs – having nearly the same seniority – still had 156,645 francs left, and the Mounted Dragoons fully 773,730 francs. By that same date the Mounted Grenadiers had already spent 300,000 francs more on uniforms and equipment than the budget permitted. Spending on a yearly basis was 210,000 francs above that of the Mounted Dragoons, and even now, when the budget for a horse was 600 francs, they spent more than was allowed because they were very particular about the colour and size.

At the beginning of 1813, even with the fairly modest aim of completing two squadrons fit for combat service, there was still a shortfall of 19 officers – a squadron-leader, 4 captains, 2 sub-adjutant-majors, 6 first lieutenants and 6 second lieutenants – at a time when there were only 4 lieutenants present in Paris. Napoleon consequently asked Eugène, on 22 January 1813, to send all available officers and NCOs who were with the army back to Mainz; every time Eugène had assembled a company of 100 soldiers he was to provide them with the necessary officers and send any officers extra to that requirement back. The emperor also ordered his stepson to put the cavalry of the Guard under the command of an experienced officer, suggesting Gens Guyot and Exelmans and Maj Letort as possibilities.

On 23 January 1813, Napoleon decreed that men for a 300-strong squadron for the Mounted Grenadiers and another for the Dragoons of the Guard were to be levied. For each squadron 150 men were to be chosen from those in the infantry of the Guard who were capable of riding a horse and met the physical requirements; once selected, they were to be uniformed and sent to the riding schools without delay. The remaining 300 men were chosen from among the 10,000 conscripts levied for the Guard. These would be called 'Second Grenadiers', receiving the pay of Line Cuirassiers or Dragoons, plus a supplement when they were based in Paris. They were to be organized into a 6th Squadron, ranking as members of the Young Guard, while their officers retained Old Guard status.

Correspondence between the emperor and Eugène on 24 January reveals that the Mounted Grenadiers and Dragoons had 477 mounted men still serving with the army. Napoleon asked the viceroy to retain enough company-level officers to form a two-company squadron of each unit and to send all additional officers and NCOs back. In the meantime, Gen Walther commanded a column of Guard Cavalry 932 strong that would march towards Mainz via Fulda, where they would receive new uniforms and equipment and be organized into four squadrons.

In an undated document probably dating from early February we find that the regiment still lacked 659 men, and was to receive 546 troopers coming from the cavalry regiments in Spain and from the levies (conscripts) for the Guard. This meant that they still needed more than 100 men to fill the ranks; one possibility was to divert them from those initially selected for the Mounted Chasseurs. They still lacked 715 horses, as only 400 had been

(continued on page 34)

1: Commanding officer, *grande tenue*, July 1804
2 & 3: Grenadiers, *grande tenue*, July 1804

A

1: Trumpeter, Consular Guard, *c.*1802–03
2: Kettle-drummer, Consular Guard, *c.*1802–03
3: Junior officer standard-bearer, 1st Squadron, July 1804

1 & 3: Grenadiers, *grande tenue*, 1806–14
2: Sergeant-major, *grande tenue*, c.1810
1
2
3
P. Courcelle

1: GenDiv Count Walther, *grande tenue de parade*, *c.*1810
2: Officer, *grande tenue*, *c.*1810
3: Colonel-Major Louis Lepic, 1807

D

1: Trumpeter, *grande tenue*, 1813–14
2: Kettle-drummer, *grande tenue*, 1804
3: Trumpeter, *grande tenue de parade*, 1805–13
2
3
1
P. Lourcelle

1: Grenadier, *tenue de campagne*
2: Junior officer, *tenue de campagne*, *c*.1805–06
3: Trumpeter, *tenue de campagne*, 1804–14

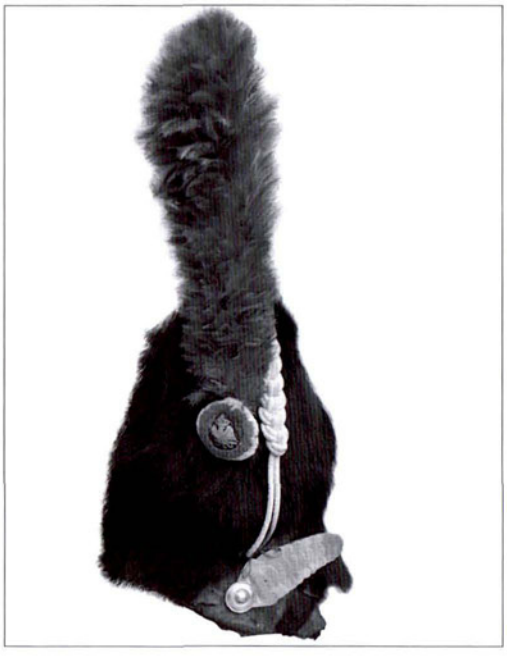
1: Trumpeter, *tenue de quartier*, *c.*1810
2: Grenadier, *tenue d'écurie*
3: Grenadier *en manteau*, *c.*1813
4: Junior officer, everyday barracks dress

BELGIUM, JUNE 1815

1: Trumpeter

2: Grenadier

3: Officer



Mounted Grenadiers' bearskin headdress, from front, back, left and right sides; only a few examples of this symbol of élite status survive today. No major alterations were made to this headdress during the Empire. It is very plain when seen from the front, almost the only visible detail being the the *aurore* tassel hanging at top centre. The top shows a round scarlet patch – the *cul de singe* or 'monkey's arse' – with a cross of two *aurore* stripes; in time these tended to fade to a yellowish shade. On the left side is the tricolour pompon bearing the Imperial eagle and the tall red plume; the full dress *aurore* cord, ending in a 'flounder' and a tassel, hangs down the right side (see also page 46). Another peculiarity was the brass chinscales, normally seen only on helmets; they could be fastened backwards to a hook fixed at the rear of the bearskin. (Private collection, France)

bought. The horse equipment was also a problem: 310 complete sets were available in Paris and 122 sets across the Rhine, so the shortfall was 1,067 from the 1,499 sets needed. A thousand saddles were already on order for the end of March, and another saddle-maker promised to have some 150 more ready at the same time. The Senate provided 200 horses.[2]

Some senior officers also had to be replaced. General Lepic had survived the rigours of the retreat from Moscow but, given his medical condition, he was unable to continue on active service. He requested promotion to *général de division* and a command in one of the Military Divisions in the Empire; on 9 February 1813 he was duly rewarded with the rank he asked for (he later became the commander of the 2nd Regiment of Guards of Honour – see MAA 378). For the posts of major Gen Walther proposed Gens Castex and Levesque-Laferrière. Castex presented no problem and Napoleon agreed, but Levesque-Laferrière was serving with the Army of the North in Spain, and confirmation had to be sought that he had not been killed or taken prisoner. Within the regiment, 1 squadron-leader, 2 captains and a first lieutenant all asked to take their pensions, while 4 captains, one first and one second lieutenant would transfer to commands in Line units; the Line would furnish their replacements.

On 9 February, Napoleon explained to the Minister of War that Gen Barrois would command the 1st Young Guard Division. The cavalry attached to this two-brigade division would consist of a squadron of each cavalry regiment of the Guard except for the Mounted Chasseurs, which would provide two squadrons. These five squadrons were commanded by Maj Leclerc and reinforced with two batteries of Horse Artillery. This fully equipped Guard Division was also accompanied by smaller detachments of mounted troopers who had spare horses with them to take to Fulda. The Mounted Grenadier squadron totalled 250 men and the lesser detachment comprised another 125 plus 250 horses. This 1,250-strong column was to leave Paris on 16 February.

While he worked on the reorganization of the Imperial Guard the emperor still paid personal attention to even the slightest details. On 15 February he decreed that the Second Mounted Grenadiers (Young Guard) – as well as the equivalents in the Dragoons, Chasseurs and Artillery – were not to receive the shoulder aiguillette for their uniforms, in order to avoid confusion with the Old Guard units.

On 23 February, Napoleon wrote to Duroc that the Mounted Grenadiers lacked 617 men; 447 were on their way to the Quartier Napoléon in Paris, so the regiment was still short by some 200 men. It also lacked 684 horses, but 320 were equally on their way, and the regional Departments of the Empire donated another 360. The Mounted Chasseurs, by contrast, had more men and horses than they needed, therefore Napoleon asked Duroc to see how these surplus troopers and mounts could be dispersed into the other Guard cavalry regiments.

Colonels of the Regiment
Ordener, 14 November 1801
Walther, 20 May 1806
Guyot, 30 November 1813
Guyot, 14 April 1815

Majors
Oulié, 31 January – 26 October 1804
Lepic, 21 March 1805 – 9 February 1813
Chastel, 18 July 1805 – 26 April 1812
Exelmans, 9 July – 8 September 1812
Castex, 9 February 1813 – May 1814
Levesque-Laferrière, 9 February 1813 – May 1814
Jamin de Bermuy, 16 March – May 1814
Jamin de Bermuy, 14 April 1815

All these efforts allowed the Guard to send piecemeal reinforcements to the army in Germany. On 15 February a detachment of 199 men and 231 horses had left Paris. On 5 March, a column of Guard cavalry left Paris with 250 men and 150 horses from the 2nd Lancers, 125 men with an equal number of horses of the Mounted Chasseurs, and 250 Dragoons with 350 horses. With them marched 150 mounted Dragoons from the Paris Guard, who were to serve in the 2nd Lancers. Another 68 mounted troopers from the Gendarmerie d'Espagne followed them, to be divided between the Mounted Chasseurs, Grenadiers and Dragoons. In all, 968 men with 1,068 horses marched towards the Rhine. Still more men and horses were needed, and on 6 March the emperor decreed more conscripts for the cavalry of the Guard, of whom 400 were to go to the Second Mounted Grenadiers.

With a new army, mostly of conscripts who had to be taught their trade hastily while actually on the march into Germany, Napoleon started planning his new campaign. He ordered that on 12 April Marshal Bessières was to be with his staff at Gotha, where the entire cavalry of the Guard, 5,000 strong, also gathered. The topping-up process continued, and on 29 March Napoleon decreed that another 1,000 men had to be provided by the depots of 50 Line cavalry regiments, of whom 130 were to go to the Mounted Grenadiers. In the first week of April 1813 the regiment numbered:

At Gotha: 8 officers with 117 NCOs and men, plus 118 horses
At Frankfurt (on 1 April): 21 officers with 500 NCOs and men, plus 409 horses
En route to Frankfurt-am-Main and at Trier (1 April): 9 officers with 199 NCOs and men, plus 103 horses
Leaving Paris between 25 March and 6 April: 4 officers with 120 NCOs and men, plus 124 horses

In all, 42 officers and 936 NCOs and men, plus 754 horses, were present with the army, while another 33 officers and 312 NCOs and men, with 423 horses, were at the depot in Paris, absent or in hospital. The total strength of the regiment was 75 officers and 1,248 NCOs and men, with 1,177 horses.

On 10 April, the Mounted Grenadiers had two squadrons at Frankfurt; commanded by SqnLdr Pernet, this detachment consisted of:

1st Squadron (Delaporte)
1st Co (Capt Javary): 5 officers, 102 rankers, with 92 horses
2nd Co (Capt Goubet): 4 officers, 100 rankers, with 96 horses
2nd Squadron (Juncker)
3rd Cp (Capt Tessier): 4 officers, 101 rankers, with 87 horses
4th Co (Capt Tueffert): 5 officers, 138 NCOs rankers, with 128 horses

2 On 5 Feb 1813 the regiment thus had a notional 6 squadrons. The personnel in France were: 90 rankers available and 235 unavailable, plus 17 men in hospital or on leave. In Germany the regiment had 121 men serving with the army, 307 at depots, and 74 in hospital or on leave. This total of 844 men was thus 659 short of the establishment of 1,503. Napoleon had already ordered 300 from the cavalry regiments in Spain, plus 300 from the Guard infantry; of these, 154 had already arrived at the Paris barracks and 546 were en route. Of the 93 officers required, 8 were available and 6 unavailable in France. In Germany 12 officers were serving with the army, 45 at depots and 7 in hospital or on leave. This total of 78 officers was thus 15 short of the requirement.

Reinforcements were due to arrive, to bring their strength to 25 officers, 639 NCOs and men, of whom 294 would be Second Grenadiers (Young Guard).

With Maj Lion, who had been serving with the army since they had left Russia, were 8 officers, 119 rankers and 116 horses. At or on the way to Frankfurt were 25 officers, 639 rankers and 505 horses. Duroc asked the emperor to send Gen Walther to Germany to replace Maj Lion. In April more soldiers were rewarded for their participation in the previous campaign. One squadron-leader became a Commander in the Legion of Honour, while SqnLdrs Delaporte and Juncker became Officers, as did a captain and a lieutenant. Additionally, four lieutenants, 46 NCOs and 32 Grenadiers became Knights (Chevaliers) of the Legion.

Germany, 1813

In spring 1813 the French armies advanced deep into Germany. The Imperial Guard was five divisions strong with an effective strength of some 50,000 men. Early in May they won the battle of Lützen, followed by the victory at Bautzen; but these successes could not be fully exploited due to the lack of experienced soldiers, and particularly of cavalry.

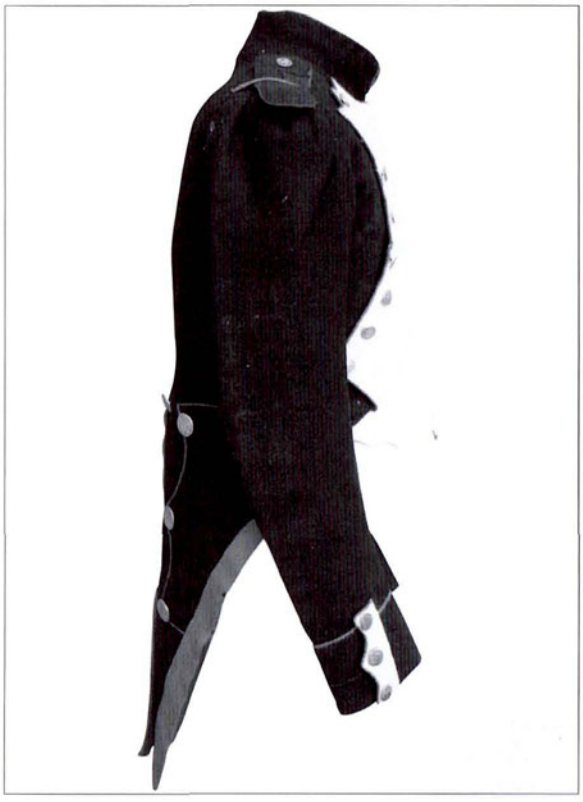
On 7 May 1813, Gen Walther brought forward four Vélites, who had managed to make their way out of Russia to rejoin the unit, to be promoted as sub-lieutenants in the regiment. All had four or five years of service and, since they had not been present at the time when most of the promotions were made in the regiment, Gen Walther asked for it now. Duroc suggested to Napoleon that he could make them sub-lieutenants in the newly organized Guards of Honour.

On 1 July the Guard rolls show the regiment's strength. Commanded by Gen Walther, it had two majors (Castex and Laferrière) plus four squadron-leaders (Rémy, Vénière, Delaporte and Juncker). The troops in Germany – carrying only one regimental Eagle with them – were quartered near Pulnitz and Kamentz; they numbered 53 officers with 142 horses and 1,105 NCOs and troopers with 1,112 horses, plus 8 draught horses and 2 forges. Another 18 officers with 44 horses and 298 men with 261 horses were at Erfurt, Glogau and Frankfurt, and 76 men were in hospital. In all, the regiment numbered 71 officers with 1,479 rankers, and they were to receive a reinforcement of 91 men with 92 horses on 2 July.

The first part of the 1813 campaign would bring not only bravery and hollow victories, but also painful losses for the emperor as well as for his Guard. General Duroc, a close friend of Napoleon who served him as Grand Marshal of the Palace, and Marshal Bessières, commanding the whole cavalry of the Guard, were both killed in action. To replace Bessières, Napoleon suggested to Minister of War Clarke that Gen Nansouty should join him at his headquarters by early August. Nansouty, who was recovering from the Russian campaign at the spa at Bourbonne-les-Bains, confirmed to the minister that he would.

After the first French victories, the ever-increasing Allied armies – advised by the former French officers Marshal Bernadotte, now heir to the throne of Sweden, and Gen Moreau, who had returned from exile in the USA – changed their strategy. The outnumbered French forces necessarily had to operate in dispersed elements, and rather than attack Napoleon's main army the Allies concentrated on manoeuvring to defeat these separated corps one by one, obliging the emperor to rush from one point to another

OPPOSITE ***Habit*** **coatee of the Young Guard Mounted Grenadiers, 1813–14. At first the regiment were issued with a single-breasted *surtout* for campaign and undress use, in addition to the full-dress *habit*. In 1809 another uniform coat was added, cut like full dress but in much coarser material and cheaper to produce; these were still in use in 1814, though mainly by non-commissioned officers. The inventories of regimental stores also show that separate lapels were ordered, probably with the intention of fixing them to old *surtouts*. When the regiment was reinforced with Young Guard squadrons in 1813 the latter's uniforms showed only slight differences from those of the Old Guard; the cuffs were dark blue piped in scarlet instead of solid scarlet, and the contre-epaulettes in *aurore* colour were replaced by dark blue shoulder straps edged in scarlet. See also page 45. (Private collection, France)**



in attempts to bring them to decisive battle himself. Each time he caught up with one enemy force it retreated, while others took the opportunity of attacking his lieutenants, thus whittling away French strength and freedom of movement. On 26–27 August, Napoleon beat the Austrian army at Dresden; but on 16–19 October the Allies closed in on him at Leipzig for the climactic battle of the campaign. Running out of ammunition, and weakened by the defections of his German allies, Napoleon had to fall back towards the French border in the face of overwhelming opposition, although leaving strong garrisons in strategic fortresses.

Near Hanau, on 30–31 October, his Bavarian former allies tried to block the march of what they apparently considered a beaten army. Napoleon ordered the Guard to advance as fast as they could. The cavalry charged the Bavarians successfully, chasing them from the field and allowing the army to continue their retreat towards the border. One of the regiment's casualties at the battle of Hanau was 1st Lt Guindey, the officer who had killed Prince Louis of Prussia at the battle of Saalfeld in 1806; another was Maj Laferrière-Lévêque, who received six sabre cuts to his left shoulder and arm. Although he did not fall in battle, another victim of the campaign would be Gen Walther, commander of the Mounted Grenadiers. Taken ill nears Metz, where he had hoped to recover from the exhaustions of the last two campaigns, he died suddenly at Kussel during the night of 24 November 1813. His body, escorted by a detachment of Mounted Grenadiers under the command of SqnLdr Juncker – the dead general's nephew – was taken to the Cathedral of Metz before being transferred to his final resting place in the Pantheon in Paris. On 17 December, the emperor wrote to Countess Walther that he had lost one of his bravest generals, and that she and her two daughters could always rely upon his protection. General Guyot, former commander of the Mounted Chasseurs, replaced Gen Walther as commander of the regiment.

On 1 November 1813 the regiment had 60 officers with 156 horses, and 1,134 NCOs and troopers with 1,025 horses, serving with the army. At Metz there were another 7 officers, 174 rankers and 148 horses, and at Kaiserslautern 4 officers, 200 rankers plus 180 horses. The personnel in Paris were 8 officers plus 109 NCOs and troopers, with 77 horses.

France, 1814

Driven out of Germany, in December 1813 Napoleon had to rebuild his army for the second time in only a year. Resources of men, horses and equipment and materials of all kinds were scare, and most of the experienced troops were either serving near the Franco-Spanish border now threatened by Wellington, or besieged in the German towns that they still held.

By decree of 4 December, the Guard's heavy cavalry would consist of 6 squadrons of 250 men each, plus 6 squadrons of Mounted Dragoons. The newly formed 1st Scouts of the Guard (1er Régiment d'Eclaireurs de la Garde) were attached to the Mounted Grenadiers, whose ranks had to be filled out by troopers from the four regiments of Guards of Honour. Ten days later a provisional organization for the Guard cavalry was decreed. The Mounted Grenadiers were to serve in the 2nd Guard Cavalry Division commanded by Gen Guyot, comprising the Old and Young Guard elements of the regiment and the Dragoons, and the Old Guard squadrons of the Mounted Chasseurs. By 16 January 1814 another

Roll of regimental officers, from 1813 *Almanach Impérial*
(Decorations, Legion of Honour: * = Knight, O* = Officer, C* = Commander, GC* = Grand Cross)

Regimental Staff
Colonel: GenDiv Count Walther (GC*)
Majors: GenBrig Baron Laferrière-Lévêque (C*), GenBrig Baron Castex (C*)
Squadron leaders: Quartermaster Baron Perrot (O*), Baron Remy (O*), Chevalier Hardy (O*), Morin (O*), Vénière (O*), Pernet (O*), Delaporte (O*), Juncker (O*)
Captains Adjutant-Major: Scribe (*), Lepot (*)
Captain Instructor: Le Maire (*).
Captains Administrative Adjutant: Javary (*), Varnout (*), Messager (*)
First Lieutenants, sous adjudant-majors: Dessoffy (*), Le Roy (*), Guindey (*), La Bachellerie (*)
Second Lieutenants Eagle-Bearers: Latarte (*), Bertrand (*), Manaut (*), Dalery
Surgeon-majors: Dieche (*), Valet (*), Libon
Assistant surgeons: Descot, Gauthier, Thevenot

Captains: Le Clerc (*), Berger (*), Harembert (*), Tueffert (*), Schmidt (*), Spennel (*), Coster (*), Tessier (O*), Braun, Kister (*), Klein (*), Mary (*)

First Lieutenants: Bufquin (*), Barthon (*), Coutausse (*), Richard (*), Gaudinot (*), Calvy (*), Franquin (*), Teysseyre (*), Hablot (*), Billot (*), Moreau (*), Lapersonne (*), Rohas (*), Lavergne, Buretel (*), Lamarcq (*), Fauconnet (*), Chastel-Boinville, Bodson-Noirfontaine, Verrier, Rogeaux (*), Phitily (*), Evrard (*), Barbier (*)

Second Lieutenants: Vergilat (*), Patrin (*), Lignot (*), Jeannet (*), Allmacher (*), Bergeret (*), Pannier (*), Blachier, Glauron (*), Pierrepont, Lhotte, Léonard, Desiles,Lebreton, Grival, Tabary, Barthélemy, Pichenot, Ogier (*), Jacques (*), Debergues (*), Gérard (*), Tandeau, Ducros de Chabannes, Gonabin (*), Verne, Leleu (*)

240 Young Guard Gendarmes d'Élite had been sent to the Mounted Grenadiers to fill the gaps. Three days later a new decree ordered the cavalry regiments fighting with the French Army of Spain to send collectively another 1,000 men with more than four years of service to the Guard's depots, of whom 300 were destined for the Horse Grenadiers. An additional 100 troopers were to be provided by the cavalry depots at Versailles and the 1st Military Division (Paris).

The 1814 campaign began badly. The Allies were expected to invade France from the north, through Holland via Antwerp, and Napoleon made his dispositions accordingly. In fact the main attack came from across the Rhine, entering France from Switzerland and Germany and thrusting through Alsace towards Reims and, ultimately, Paris. With his troops dispersed between that front and the others in Holland and Belgium, on the Franco-Spanish border and in Italy, the emperor had only some 70,000 men to face Coalition armies totalling at least half a million. Conducting an agile mobile defence in the bitter weather of January–February 1814, Napoleon showed such flashes of his old genius that the 1814 Campaign of France would be recognized as one of his finest achievements, but the merciless arithmetic was against him.

At La Rothière, outnumbered by four to one, the army experienced its first defeat on French soil in many years. Napoleon soon got the measure of his opponent's tactics, however, and between 10–14 February he inflicted four stinging defeats on Marshal Blücher's army in the battles of Champaubert, Montmirail, Château-Thierry and Vauchamps – with just 30,000 men, he cost Blücher's 100,000-strong army some 18,000 casualties. Like the other Guard regiments the Mounted Grenadiers were omnipresent; although a shadow of their former strength, they charged enemy batteries as well as enemy cavalry and infantry, and usually with success.

At the battle of Craonne on 7 March, Capt Kister was killed, and Maj Laferrière-Lévêque was wounded by a bullet in the chest and had his foot carried away by a Russian cannonball. While the surgeon amputated his leg he called out 'Vive l'Empereur!' until he lost consciousness. (He later became commandant of the Cavalry School at Saumur. He remained a keen horseman, and each time he rode out a trooper accompanied him carrying the general's wooden leg.) On 15 March the 800-strong Mounted Grenadiers served in Gen Letort's 3rd Guard Cavalry Division; Letort was subsequently replaced by Gen Lefèbvre-Desnoëttes, recalled from Belgium. One day later, returning from service in Spain, Jamin de Bermuy was made major in the regiment.

The emperor's victories were not significant enough to halt the converging Allied armies; Paris capitulated in late March, and on 11 April 1814 Napoleon was obliged to surrender unconditionally.

KING AND EMPEROR

After the emperor abdicated and left France for exile on the isle of Elba with a small escort from his Imperial Guard, on 12 May 1814 the restored King Louis XVIII signed an ordinance that transformed the former Imperial Guard into the Corps Royal de France. This was a bitter pill for the proud Mounted Grenadiers to swallow; transformed into the Corps Royal des Cuirassiers de France, their pay was reduced by a quarter and their strength cut by 50 per cent.

Their final organization was stipulated on 21 June: the regiment was to consist of four squadrons each of two companies, with a total strength to 42 officers and 602 rankers. Their former Eagles were replaced by white standards embellished with the royal arms of France and the name of the regiment. Worse, their former uniforms were replaced with those worn by the Cuirassiers, and the eagle-embossed buttons were replaced by others showing the Bourbon lily. Protesting at the removal of all the reminders of their proud past, the regiment were at least allowed to keep their tall black bearskins instead of receiving the Cuirassier helmets that would have made them almost indistinguishable from a Line unit.

The former Imperial Guard units were now far from being the darlings of the Ministry of War, and men started leaving the ranks without permission and drifting home – it was even said that the ministry secretly encouraged this. One day, when distributing the Royal Order of St Louis to his officers, Gen Guyot was heard to say to several of them that he hoped they didn't take their oath to the king too seriously.

Clothing ordered between 1 January & 23 July 1814:

1,645 *habits* (coatees), 1st quality
3,995 habits, 2nd quality
26 trumpeters' habits, *grand uniforme* (full dress)
112 trumpeters' habits, *petit uniforme* (undress)
986 grenadiers' *surtouts* (single-breasted uniform coats)
122 farriers' surtouts
33 trumpeters' surtouts
44 elèves-trumpeters' surtouts (pupil-trumpeters)
187 blue *redingotes* (riding coats)
12 sky-blue redingotes
8 blue waistcoats
45 sky-blue waistcoats for pupil-trumpeters
10 blue *culottes* (trousers)
1 sky-blue culottes
45 sky-blue culottes for pupil-trumpeters
1,876 *surculottes* (riding overalls)
92 *habits-vestes* (sleeved waistcoats)
79 scarlet waistcoats
35 *pantalons garnis* (leather-reinforced trousers)
526 grey pantalons, 1st quality
889 grey pantalons, 2nd quality
4,636 blue *bonnets de police* (forage caps)
140 sky-blue bonnets de police
89 blue coats
1,022 white coats
80 sky-blue coats
3,854 blue *portemanteaux* (saddle stowage bags)
85 sky-blue portemanteaux
7,411 stable jackets
581 stable trousers
4,027 *pantalons de treillis* (canvas trousers)
2,043 pairs of lapels for coatees
1,505 *capotes-manteaux* (sleeved riding cloaks)
1,215 *parmentures de manteau* (cuffs for above?)
21 *capotes de guimbardier* (wagon-drivers' overcoats)
4 *habits de courier* (message-rider's coatees?)
857 *contre épaulettes en drap* (unfringed cloth epaulettes)
1 *dolman* for the horse-drummer (corded hussar-style jacket)
1,439 pairs of woollen *galons* (rank stripes)
1,801 pairs of woollen galons
21 habits-vestes for wagon-drivers
31 blue waistcoats for wagon-drivers
1,370 grenadiers' *housses, grand uniforme* (full-dress saddle cloths)
1,745 grenadiers' housses, *petit uniforme* (undress saddle cloths)
25 trumpeters' housses, full dress
73 trumpeters' housses, undress

The Hundred Days

In February 1815 the regiment was at Arras, where on 8 March they read in the *Moniteur* that the former emperor had returned to the southern coast of France. General Guyot was ordered to leave the depot and join troops that were being sent to halt Napoleon's progress northwards from the Riviera. Guyot took some 520 men with him, and soon began to meet on the road officers who were leaving their stations in order not to block Napoleon's march but to join it. Orders failed to arrive, and chaos broke out within the ranks of the army that the Bourbons were trying to organize. In all this confusion, regiments refused to defend the widely unpopular royal regime and, one by one, declared themselves for Napoleon. On 22 March, Gen Guyot sent Maj Jamin to Paris to congratulate the emperor on his return and to ask for new orders for his Mounted Grenadiers. On 24 March they received an order to stay at Compiegne, but at 7pm Napoleon's ADC, Gen Drouot, arrived with orders for them to march towards Paris.

Three days later the regiment paraded in front of the emperor. On 8 April, they regained their former title of Grenadiers à Cheval de la Garde Impériale.

Factories were specially organized to complete uniforms for the Line regiments, and on 11 April the emperor decreed that another should be set up specifically to produce uniforms for the Guard, to be delivered at the rate of 500 uniforms per day. In May 1815, a few weeks before Waterloo, 243 men of the former Young Guard squadrons asked to return to the regiment. Guyot wrote: 'Perhaps they are not as perfect as the old Mounted Grenadiers, but they hope to be, and take pride in the regiment...'. On 10 June 1815 the regiment recorded the following total strength:

> Present at the depot: available, 19 officers and 20 rankers; unavailable or on detachment, 160 rankers; in hospital or on leave, 56 rankers. Serving with the army: 44 officers and 752 rankers. Total: 1,051 all ranks.

On 14 June, the day before Napoleon crossed the Franco-Belgian border with his Army of the North, Gen Guyot received the command of the 2nd Guard Cavalry Division, comprising the Dragoons and Mounted Grenadiers with 12 cannon.

At daybreak on 16 June, before the battle of Ligny against Blücher's Prussian army, the regiment still mustered 44 officers and 752 men. That day their former commander, Gen Letort, died in combat. Two days later the French army met the British-Netherlands forces on the slopes of Mont Saint Jean ridge south of Waterloo. General Guyot led at least three charges against the British squares; two horses were killed under him, and he suffered a number of sabre wounds and a musket ball in his left arm and chest. Forced to leave the battlefield, he handed over his divisional command

This non-commissioned officer wears the regimental full dress, but under magnification the buttons can be seen to be embossed with the Bourbon royal lily, so this portrait must have been commissioned shortly after Napoleon's first abdication but before the retitled 'Cuirassiers de France' received the short, single-breasted cuirassier-style coatee. (Musée de l'Empéri, Salon-de-Provence)

Drawing of Napoleon's farewell to his Imperial Guard at Fontainebleau on his first abdication, reminding us of the towering stature of the Mounted Grenadiers. The post-1808 saddle cloth bears the imperial crown corner badge. The bearskin has no cord and flounder, and is shown bearing the plain tricolour cockade, without imperial eagle, as worn before 1812. For a trooper the full fringed epaulette is also strange, as is the double border on the portemanteau. (Musée de l'Empéri, Salon-de-Provence)

to Gen Jamin of the Mounted Grenadiers, who was himself killed only minutes later. The outcome of the climactic battle of the Napoleonic Wars has been described a thousand times; this time the heroic charges of the French cavalry could not deliver victory as they had done at Marengo and Eylau. At dusk, recoiling before Wellington's British-Netherlands advance from the north and that of a Prussian corps from the east, the French army fell apart, but the Mounted Grenadiers still made a great impression on their adversaries. Captain Barton of the British 12th Light Dragoons recalled that his regiment had to advance against giants on black horses, who appeared to take but little notice of them: 'We were too weak to make an impression, they literally walked from the field, in the most majestic manner'.

The battle was followed by a chaotic retreat towards the French border, and only days later Napoleon signed his second and final abdication. The Guard regiments were dispersed across France, and in late November–December they were disbanded.

PLATE COMMENTARIES

A1: Commanding officer, *grande tenue*, July 1804

This figure, depicting the regimental commander Colonel Ordener at the formation of the Imperial Guard, is taken from the series of studies of troops stationed in and around Paris made by Hoffmann to mark the inaugural ceremonies of the First Empire. (The series now forms part of the Anne S.K. Brown Collection at Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island.)

The uniform is that of the Consular Guard, and even the buttons have probably not been changed yet to reflect the birth of the Empire. The bearskin is of modest height, as is the plume, and the fur is brushed upwards; note that no chin scales are fitted. The coatee is generously cut; the tails are longer than would later be seen, hooked back to display the red lining. The officer's uniform distinctions are all in gold bullion thread, gold lace or gilt metal. Note the collar, edged with gold lace and also bearing a chain of embroidery; this latter was authorized for privileged senior officers, but its exact design was a personal '*fantaisie*'. He carries a heavy cavalry sword, but no regulation pattern for regimental weapons yet existed. Although the squadrons at this date were ordered to ride blacks or bays, the colonel has chosen to ride a magnificent chestnut, which no doubt drew even more attention from the admiring crowds as the regiment paraded through the streets of the capital.

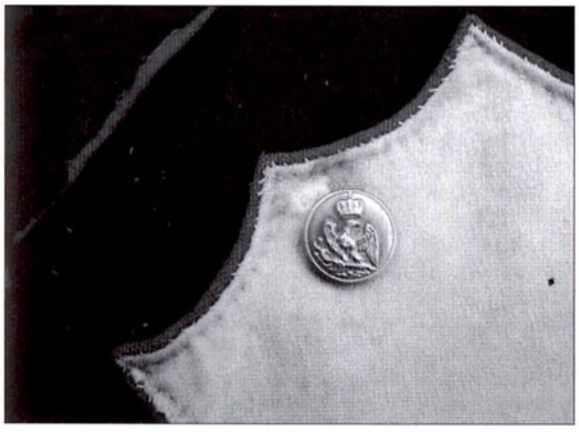
A2 & 3: Grenadiers, *grande tenue*, July 1804

Also reconstructed after Hoffmann, these two figures are again as applicable to the later Consulate as to the early Empire. Note the red piping to the collar at this date, and the brass shoulder scales. The *aurore* or 'dawn orange' shade distinctive of many Guard insignia is seen in the tasselled cords and flounder on the bearskin and the cross on its red rear patch, the aiguillette worn on the right shoulder, and the grenade badges on the turnbacks. (A note on this colour may be helpful; it was a mix of red and yellow tending towards the yellow. An orange shade tending towards the red was called *capucine*, after the flower of that name.) The cut-out brass grenade on the flap of the cartridge pouch would be kept until 1806 before being replaced by the better-known lozenge-shaped plate. It seems that at this date the Mounted Grenadiers were envisaged as fighting – like the Dragoons – both in the saddle and dismounted, and the tall boots have a leather securing tab buttoned to the trousers. The sidearm is still the heavy cavalry sabre of the Constitutional Guard, which had been transformed into the Consular Guard in 1799; note in A2 the butt of the musket slung diagonally from the right side of the saddle. The saddle portemanteau is of round section at this date, and the grenade badge is of the *Ancien Régime* form, with a large 'bomb' and small flames. Strapped on top of it is the riding cloak, folded flat around a board with its red partial lining showing. The portemanteau, saddle cloth and holster covers have edging in *aurore*, the latter two items with red outer piping. Note also the reins in *aurore* colour.

B1: Trumpeter, Consular Guard, *c*.1802–03

This reconstruction, after a period plate by Poisson and Châtaignier, already prefigures the uniforms of trumpeters of the Mounted Grenadiers under the Empire. The main features are the *chapeau bras* trimmed with gold lace and white/red feathers, and the coatee in dark sky-blue faced with crimson, richly trimmed and decorated with gold lace. Note the aiguillette worn on the left shoulder by this figure; the shorter boots cut square at the knee; and the gold chain-pattern lace on the saddle cloth and holster covers. Grey horses were a distinction of the *tête de colonne*.

General of Division Count Frédéric Henri Walther (1761–1813), by R. Lefèvre – see also Plate D1. General Walther entered the regiment as a major in May 1806 and remained with them until the end of 1813. Here he is portrayed in general's undress, with the exception of his dark blue campaign trousers. His sabre is of the same pattern as shown on page 6. The grenadier orderly holding his horse wears the grey overalls introduced in 1813 and the second model of sabre. On his bearskin, note a plain tricolour cockade without the embroidered eagle, and the cord running over the top of the cap. (Versailles; Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, © RMN / Droits réservés)



TOP **False pocket detail from the Young Guard coatee; real pockets were placed inside the tails, and three-point vertical edges were simulated outside with scarlet piping. (Private collection, France)**

BOTTOM **Lapel and shoulder strap detail of the Young Guard coatee shown on page 37. The lapels are made from a finer cloth that the body of the uniform, edged with a fine scarlet piping; the buttons are embossed with the imperial eagle. (Private collection, France)**

ABOVE RIGHT **Cuff and cuff flap detail of the Young Guard coatee, the former blue and the latter white, both piped with scarlet. A small detail hints at economies – the top button does not have a buttonhole. (Private collection, France)**

B2: Kettle-drummer, Consular Guard, *c*.1802–03
This uniform is very little known and may even be published here for the first time; it is taken directly from Poisson and Châtaignier without further attempts at interpretation. The drummer is a boy, mounted on a small horse. He wears a rich hussar-style costume; extraordinary features are the headgear, which seems to mix Hungarian with Classical themes, and the cape – not a pelisse – worn thrown back.

B3: Junior officer standard-bearer, 1st Squadron, July 1804
Another figure after Hoffmann, carrying a transitional design of standard dating from between the creation of the Empire in July 1804 and the presentation of Eagles in December that year. In the Republican and Consular cavalry each squadron had a standard in a distinctive squadron colour, with red for the 1st. After the proclamation of the Empire – or perhaps only for the inaugural ceremonies – the republican symbols were simply cut from the silk and golden eagles substituted. Notes the curled and powdered hair, an *Ancien Régime* fashion that was revived under the Directory and Consulate.

C1 & 3: Grenadiers, *grande tenue*, 1806–14
After Martinet: the silhouette is too well known to require detailed description, but should be compared with the preceding plates. The fur of the bearskin is now brushed downwards. The coatee is more snugly tailored, and the red piping has disappeared from the collar. The tails are shorter, and their turnbacks are now permanently sewn down rather than simply hooked. The troopers now carry the regiment's regulation sabre. The saddle equipment no longer includes a portemanteau when in full dress. Compare the corners of the saddle cloths of C1 and C3; the badge was the grenade until 1808, and the crown thereafter.

C2: Sergeant-major, *grande tenue*, *c*.1810
This figure is taken from a period portrait published in *La Sabretache*. The two *galons* of gold lace piped with red, sewn to the outside of each forearm, identify the rank of *maréchal-des-logis-chef*; the sergeant or *maréchal-des-logis* wore a single stripe. Both ranks wore, in place of the *aurore* uniform trim of the troopers and corporals, lace and cords in mixed gold-and-red, and their *contre-epaulettes* were red bordered with gold lace. However, their saddle cloths and holster covers were as for the junior ranks, with *aurore* trim.

FAR LEFT **The bearskin cockade of the type introduced in *c.*1812. The white, red and blue cloth is mounted on a wooden disc, and an extra piece of blue cloth bearing the imperial eagle embroidered in *aurore* was sewn on, giving a padded pompon effect. (Private collection, France)**

LEFT **Flounder of the bearskin cord, terminating in a tassel. The *aurore* cord is interwoven to a high standard of workmanship. (Private collection, France)**

D1: Divisional General Count Walther, *grande tenue de parade*, *c.*1810
Known as 'le Balafré' ('the Gashed One') on account of the huge scar across his face, Frédéric Walther (1761–1813) was a veteran of the Berchény Hussars and of many battles when he became the regimental colonel in succession to Ordener in May 1806. We have reconstructed him in the regimental officer's austere single-breasted *habit-surtout*, with the gold-and-red waist sash of his general rank. He displays the breast decoration and shoulder sash of the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour.

D2: Officer, *grande tenue*, *c.*1810
This regimental senior officer is taken from Martinet. There is little to mention in detail, but note the triple holster covers, and the gold-fringed red ribbons at the horse's ear and crupper.

D3: Colonel-Major Louis Lepic, 1807
This officer earned renown at the battle of Eylau on 8 February 1807, and was promoted to brigade general's rank immediately after the action. His foul-mouthed shout to stiffen his troopers' morale under artillery fire ('*Haut les têtes, Jamidiou – les boulets c'est pas la merde!*'), and his leadership in a subsequent charge into and out of the Russian lines that day, passed into Napoleonic legend, and the moment was immortalized in the famous painting by Edouard Détaille (see page 15). He is depicted wearing the officer's *habit-surtout*, under a velvet winter overcoat lined with bearskin.

E1: Trumpeter, *grande tenue*, 1813–14
This rear view shows the arrangement of the gold lace on the trumpeter's *habit*. In its broad lines this uniform was applicable throughout the Empire, but it is more closely datable by the length of the coatee tails, the red feather trim on the *chapeau bras*, and the hat's gold lace edging with alternating grenades and crowns in the weave.

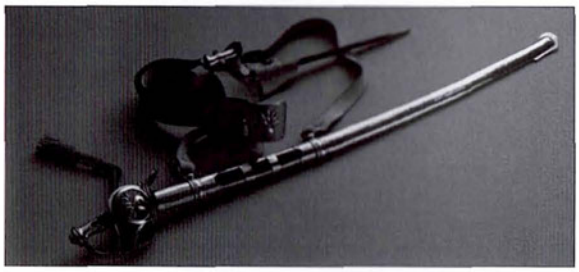
E2: Kettle-drummer, *grande tenue*, 1804
This figure is reconstructed from the Hoffmann series cited under A1, and probably depicts the same young drummer as in B2 but a couple of years later. He was first seen in this Imperial version of his extravagant costume during the Eagle ceremonies of December 1804; note the alterations to the headdress, the red breeches, and the true pelisse now slung over his dolman.

E3: Trumpeter, *grande tenue de parade*, 1805–13
Compare with E1; this shows the front of the same basic uniform, but with the white/red feather trim and plain lace worn on the bicorn hat until 1813. Note that the bridle reins are in the same *aurore*-coloured woollen fabric as those of the troopers. Behind the saddle the *manteau*, here of trumpeter's dark sky-blue lined with crimson, is again folded and strapped around a wooden board former.

F1: Grenadier, *tenue de campagne*, *c.*1810
On campaign this trooper wears, instead of the former single-breasted *surtout*, a cheaper version of the lapelled *habit* that was introduced from 1809. For field service the cords have been removed from the bearskin, and the cloak is rolled and tied around the body to give some protection from sabre-cuts. Note that the saddle portemanteau is now of rectangular section.

F2: Junior officer, *tenue de campagne*, *c.*1805–06
This unhorsed subaltern, after a contemporary painting by Lejeune, wears a private-purchase plain blue single-breasted *surtout*, as was usual on campaign service. He is roughly datable by certain details such as the boots with supple ankles. He too wears a cloak in a horseshoe roll, and his fallen bearskin is stripped of its gold parade cords – but note that the small tassel at upper front centre was a permanent fixture.

F3: Trumpeter, *tenue de campagne*, 1804–14
Although the bearskin is stripped of its cords, and a coloured plume replaces the fragile and easily soiled white *grande tenue* version, the battlefield uniform is still extremely colourful. The *habit de seconde tenue* is a retailored *grande tenue* garment, with the tassels removed from the gold lace 'loops'. (It should be noted that, as Rousselot has published in his Plate 45, the alleged 'trumpeter's white bearskin' has never been found in the clothing records of the Mounted Grenadiers or in contemporary paintings or prints. It seems to have been invented by illustrators of *c.*1890–1900, by mistaken analogy with the white colpacks of the Mounted Chasseurs trumpeters.)



Mounted Grenadier's sword belt, sabre and bayonet. The sabre is of the third model, with the quillon curving downwards; note the large cut-out grenade. The scabbard is reinforced with two brass bands around the weaker open section showing the leather. (Musée de l'Empéri, Salon-de-Provence; © RMN / André Martin)

G1: Trumpeter, *tenue de quartier*, c.1810
This figure in winter barracks dress is set apart from his fellow troopers by the dark sky-blue colour of his uniform – a single-breasted, unfaced *habit-surtout* coat as an alternative to the lapelled *habit* coatee. Note the red piping on the top and front of the collar, and on the top and rear of the cuffs. The trumpeter's coat-colour is also used for his trousers; his *bonnet de police*, which is laced, tasselled and badged in *aurore*; and his caped cloak, here partially lined with red inside its front edges.

G2: Grenadier, *tenue d'écurie*
This stable dress worn when caring for the horses was seen throughout the years of the Empire; it consists of the forage cap, stable jacket and canvas over-trousers. In foul conditions wooden clogs were sometimes worn instead of boots or shoes.

G3: Grenadier *en manteau*, c.1813
A contemporary drawing shows a caped, sleeveless riding cloak, with the *aurore* tasselled buttonhole 'loops' apparently introduced in 1813. (The records from 1814 – see table on page 40 – seem to indicate purchase of a sleeved *capote-manteau* with coloured cuff-facings.) This cloak is of unbleached off-white; note the dark blue standing collar, the strips of dark blue down the front edges of both cape and body, and the partial red lining.

G4: Junior officer, everyday barracks dress
This subaltern wears a simple outfit of dark blue *bonnet de police* and *surtout* with gold officer's distinctions, and matching trousers – essentially the same as worn on campaign in Plate F2. The boots, sabre and riding crop probably indicate that today he is supervising his grenadiers' training in sabre-drill on horseback.

H: BELGIUM, JUNE 1815

The figures on this plate reconstruct the Mounted Grenadiers' appearance in the Waterloo campaign. After Napoleon's first abdication in 1814 the Imperial Guard was disbanded, and under the restored Bourbon monarchy of Louis XVIII the Mounted Grenadiers became the Corps Royal des Cuirassiers de France. They were authorized a new uniform which included a single-breasted, unfaced *habit-veste* with shortened tails for wear under their new cuirasses. The armour had not yet been delivered by the time of Napoleon's escape from Elba and return to the throne, so the regiment, although renamed Mounted Grenadiers of the Imperial Guard, went on campaign in their royalist uniforms.

H1: Trumpeter
It seems that for some reason – probably simple administrative lethargy – the old sky-blue uniforms were still held in the regimental stores at the time of Napoleon's return. We have given our trumpeter a *surtout* in the traditional colours: dark sky-blue with crimson collar and cuffs edged with gold lace. His horse equipment is that of an ordinary trooper.

H2: Grenadier
His bearskin displays the simple tricolour cloth cockade that was hastily issued to replace the white royalist cockade, since there was no time to remanufacture the elaborate Imperial eagle version. Note here the simple cuirassier-style coatee described above.

H3: Officer
Apart from the coatee of the Cuirassiers de France the details are speculative, but seem entirely plausible considering the clothing and equipment items available at that date.

Officer's sword belt plate. (Salon-de-Provence, Musée de l'Empéri/Musée de l'Armée, ancienne collection Raoul et Jean Brunon; © RMN / André Martin)

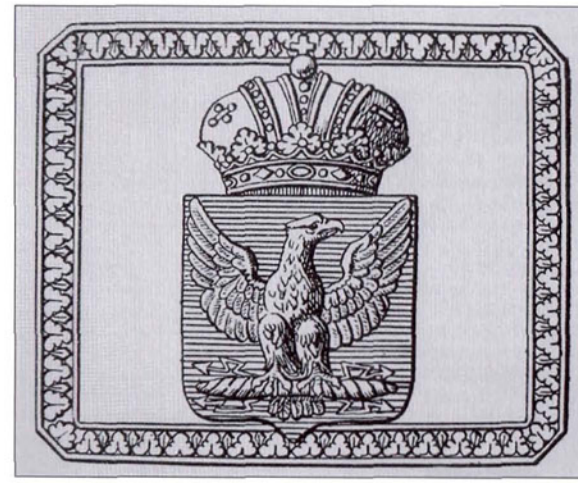
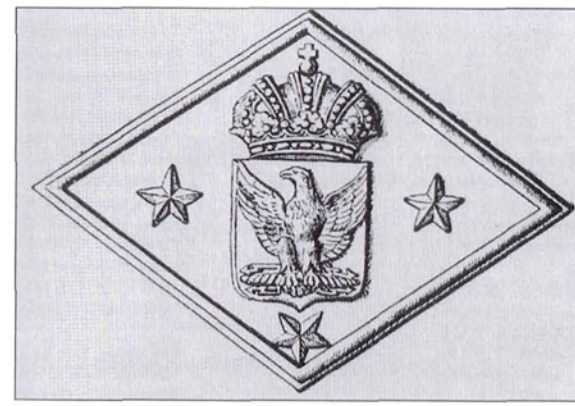


Plate of the ranker's shoulder-belt cartridge pouch, of the 1806 pattern.



INDEX

References to illustration captions are shown in **bold**. Plates are shown with page and caption locators in brackets.

Army of Spain 23, 24, 39
Army of the North 34, 42
Army of the Reserve 5
artillery forces 7, 11, 15, 17, 20, 21
Auerstaedt, battle at (1806) 14
Austerlitz, battle of (1805) 12–13, 14
Austrian army 5, 11, 12, 17, 38

Bautzen, battle of (1813) 36
Beauharnais, Eugène de 5, 9, 12, 22, 24
Berchény Hussars 13, 46
Berthier, Marshal 11, 17, 22
Bessières, Marshal 5, 6, 9, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 35, 36
Blücher, Marshal 40, 42
Bonaparte, Emperor Napoleon 18, 21, 22
  coronation of 9
  and 'coup of 18 Brumaire' 4
  surrender and abdication 40, 42, 43, **43**, 47
Borodino, battle of (1812) 20–1
Bourdon-Durocher, Ferdinand P. A. 11, **11**

Carabiniers of the Line 17, 18
Castex, Gen 34, 36, 39
Champaubert, battle of (1814) 40
Chastel, Gen 18, 20, 34
Château-Thierry, battle of (1814) 40
Clarke, Minister of War 18, 19, 21, 34, 36
clothing/uniforms 41
  breeches/trousers **A2–3**(25, 44), **E2**(29, 46), **G1–2**, **4**(31, 47), 41, **44**
  capes/cloaks **A2–3**(25, 44), **B2**(26, 45), **E2**(29, 46), **F1–2**(30, 46), **G1**, 3(31, 47), 41, 45
  coatees/coats/jackets **3**, **11**, 14, **18**, **A1**(25, 44), **B1**(26, 44), **C1**, 3(27, 45), **D1**, 3(28, 46), **E1–2**(29, 46), **F1–G2**(30–1, 46–7), **H1–2**(32, 47), 36, 37, 41, **42**, **45**, 46, 47
  overalls **15**, **44**
conscripts ('Second Grenadiers') 24, 35, 36
Consular Guard 3, 4, 5, 6–7, **6**, 8, 11, 16, 21, **A1**(25, 44), **B1–2**(26, 44–5), 44
Consulate (the) 4, **4**, 45
Corps of Mounted Vélites 11, 13, 14, 19, 21, 36
Corps Royal de France 40
Craonne, battle of (1814) 40
Cuirassiers de France **H3**(32, 47)
Cuirassiers of the Line 17, 18, 40

decoration
  aiguillettes 3, **3**, **4**, **9**, **10**, **11**, **17**, **18**, 19, **19**, **23**, **A2–B1**(25–6, 44), 34, **42**, **44**
  buttons 4, 9, **A1**(25, 44), 40, **42**, **45**
  cockades **3**, **10**, **17**, **20**, **23**, **H2**(32, 47), **43**, **44**, **46**
  cords and flounders **20**, **A2–3**(25, 44), **C2**(27, 45), **33**, 43, **44**, 46, **46**
  cul de singe patch **20**, **A2–3**(25, 44), **33**
  epaulettes **17**, **20**, **23**, **42**, **43**, **44**
  plumes **3**, **4**, **8**, **9**, **10**, **14**, **18**, **19**, **23**, **A1**(25, 44), **B1**(26, 44), F3(30, 46), **33**, **43**
Directory (the) 4, 45
Dresden, battle of (1813) 38
drummers 5, 7, **B2**(26, 45), E2(29, 46)

equipment 16
  cartridge pouches **A2–3**(25, 44), **47**
  chin scales **33**, 44
  gloves **17**, **20**, **23**
  holster covers **A2–B1**(25–6, 44), **C2**(27, 45), **D2**(28, 46)
  portemanteaux **9**, 10, 14, **19**, **A2–3**(25, 44), **E3–F1**(29–30, 46), 41, **43**, 45
  riding crops **G4**(31, 47)
  sabretaches **7**
  scabbards **6**, 7, **43**, **47**
  sword belts **4**, **18**, **20**, **47**
Essling, battle at (1809) 17
Exelmans, Gen 20, 24, 34
Eylau, battle of (1807) 15–16, **15**, 43, 46

Garde du Corps Legislative 4
Garde du Directoire Exécutif **3**, 4, 11
Gendarmerie d'Espagne 35
Gendarmes d'Élite 9, 16, 17, 22, 38
Germany, action in 17–18, 20, 22, 35–6, 39
Grenadiers à Cheval de la Garde Impériale 42
Guards of Honour 36, 38
Guyot, Gen 24, 34, 38, 40, 42–3

hair styles 3, **4**, **20**, **B3**(26, 45), **42**
headwear **7**, **9**, **10**, **14**, **B2**(26, 45)
  bearskin 3, **4**, 10, **15**, **18**, 19, **19**, **20**, 22, **23**, 24, **A1–3**(25, 44), **C1**, 3(27, 45), **F1–3**(30, 46), **H2**(32, 47), **33**, 40, **43**, **44**, 46
  bicorn hat **3**, **8**, **17**, **19**, **E3**(29, 46)
  bonnets de police **G1–2**, 4(31, 47), 41
  chapeau bras **B1**(26, 44), **E1**(29, 46)
  trumpeters' hats **14**, **15**, 24
Hohenlinden, battle at (1800) 6
Horse Artillery 34
Horse Grenadiers 39
horses 7, 8, 10, 12, **14**, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 24, 35, 36, 38, 42, 43
  equipment **4**, 5, 7, **7**, **8**, **9**, 10, **10**, **11**, 14, **14**, **15**, 16, **19**, 20, 24, **A1–B2**(25–6, 44), **C1–3**(27, 45), **D2**(28, 46), **E3–F1**(29–30, 46), **H1**(32, 47), 34, **43**, **44**
  restocking of numbers 20, 24, 34

Imperial Guard (cavalry) 11, 23, 24
  in action 9, 11, 12, 14, 15–17, 18, 19, 20–2, 23, 34, 35–6, 38
  composition/organization of 9, 11, 18, 34, 38
    régiments de marche 17, 21
  disbandment of 43
  Napoleon's farewell to **43**
  rebuilding of 16, 22–4, 34, 35–6, 38–9
  strength (Dec 1813) 36, 38
  Vélites in service of 19
Imperial Guard (infantry) 11, 15, 20, 23, 24
Italy, action in 4, 5, 9, 19, 39

Jamin de Bermuy, Gen 34, 42, 43
Jena, battle at (1806) 14
Juncker, SqnLdr 35, 36, 38

La Rothière, battle of (1814) 40
Laferrière-Lévèque, Maj 34, 36, 38, 39, 40
Lefebvre-Desnouëttes, Gen 22, 40
Legion of Honour 10–11, **11**, 16, 19, **20**, **D1**(28, 46), 36, 39, **42**
Leipzig, battle of (1813) 38
Lepic, Gen Louis 9–10, 15, **15**, 16, 18, 20, **D3**(28, 46), 34
Letort, Gen 24, 40, 42
Ligny, battle of (1815) 42
Line cavalry regiments 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 24, 35
Louis XV, King of France 3
Louis XVIII, King of France 40, 47
Lützen, battle of (1813) 36

Mamelukes 5, 9, 13, 18, 21
Marengo, battle of (1800) 5, 9, 43
Montmirail, battle of (1814) 40
Moscow, march to/retreat from 20, 21–2, 23, 34
Mounted Artillery 21, 34
Mounted Chasseurs 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 24, 34, 35, 38, 46
Mounted Dragoons 16, 18, 20, 21, 24, 34, 35, 38, 42
Mounted Grenadiers 4
  in action 5, 9, 13, 15–16, **15**, 17, 18, 19, 20–2, 23, **H–H3**(32, 47), 35–6, 38, 40, 42, 43
  composition/organization 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 23, 24, 35, 38, 39, 40, 42, 47
    régiments de marche 12, 17
    Vélites in service of 11, 13, 14, 19, 21, 36
  creation/origins of 3
  disbandment of 43
  escort/guard/patrol duties 21, 22
  rebuilding of 16, 17, 18, 22–4, 34, 35, 36, 38–9
  regimental commanders 5, 6, 13, 20, **A1**(25, 44), **D1**, 3(28, 46), 34, 36, 38, 40, 42
  regimental staff 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 18, 23, 34, 36, 39
  selection requirements 3, 10–11, 22, 24, 43
  strength (Sep 1804–Jun 1814) 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 34, 35, 36, 38, 40, 42
  uniforms/dress 3, 4, 7, **8**, **9**, **10**, **15**, **17**, **18**, **19**, **20**, **23**, 24, **A2–3**(25, 44), **C1**, 3(27, 45), **F1**(30, 46), **G1–H3**(31–2, 47), **42**, **44**
Murat, Marshal Joachim 5, 14, 15, 22

Old Guard 10, 21, **23**, 24, 34, 36, 38
Ordener, Gen of Dvn Count Michel 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, **A1**(25, 44), 34, 46
Oulié, Col 9, 34

Poland, movement through 14, 20, 22
Portugal 16, 18, 19
Prussia, action in 14
Prussian army 15, 42, 43

Reserve Cavalry Corps 15
Russia, action in 20–2
Russian army 11, 12–13, 14, 15

Saalfeld, battle of (1806) 38
Spain, action in 16–17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 34, 39
standard-bearers/standards 4, 13, **13**, **B3**(26, 45), 40
surgeons/veterinaries 7, 8, 13, 39

trumpeters 4, 5, 6, 8, **14**, 15, **15**, 20, 23, 24, **B1**(26, 44), **E1**, 3(29, 46), **F3–G1**(30–1, 46–7), **H1**(32, 47), 41

Vauchamps, battle of (1814) 40
Vélites (probationers) 11, 13, 14, **17**, 19, 21, 36
Versailles (cavalry depot) 16, 18, 39

Wagram, battle (1809) 17, 19
Walther, Gen of Dvn Frédéric 13–14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, **D1**(28, 46), 34, 36, 38, 39, **44**
Waterloo, battle of (1815) 42–3, **H–H3**(32, 47)
weapons
  cannon/field guns 11, 16, 17, 18, 42
  bayonets 7, **18**, **47**
  grenades (as decorative motif) 7, **14**, **20**, **A2–3**(25, 44), **C1**(27, 45), **E1**(29, 46), **47**
  muskets 3, 7, **9**, **18**, **A2–3**(25, 44)
  sabres 3, 5, 6, 7, **8**, **17**, **23**, **A2–3**(25, 44), **C1**, 3(27, 45), **G4**(31, 47), **44**, **47**
  swords **4**, **9**, **10**, **14**, **15**, **A1**(25, 44), **43**
Wellington, Duke of 18, 38, 43

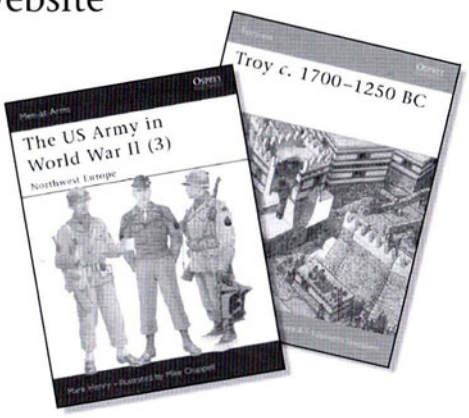
Young Guard 10, 21, 24, 34, 35, 36, **37**, 38, 39, 42, **45**

Related Titles

ISBN	SERIES	No.	TITLE
978 0 85045 096 5	Men-at-Arms	64	Napoleon's Cuirassiers and Carabiniers
978 0 85045 269 3	Men-at-Arms	68	Napoleon's Line Chasseurs
978 0 85045 288 4	Men-at-Arms	83	Napoleon's Guard Cavalry
978 1 84176 488 7	Men-at-Arms	378	Napoleon's Guards of Honour
978 1 84176 508 2	Men-at-Arms	389	Napoleon's Red Lancers
978 1 84176 709 3	Men-at-Arms	405	Napoleon's Carabiniers
978 1 84176 955 4	Men-at-Arms	429	Napoleon's Mamelukes
978 1 84176 956 1	Men-at-Arms	433	Napoleon's Scouts of the Imperial Guard
978 1 84603 256 1	Men-at-Arms	440	Napoleon's Polish Lancers of the Imperial Guard
978 1 84603 257 8	Men-at-Arms	444	Napoleon's Mounted Chasseurs of the Imperial Guard
978 1 84176 793 2	Elite	115	Napoleon's Imperial Headquarters (1)
978 1 84176 794 9	Elite	116	Napoleon's Imperial Headquarters (2)
978 1 84603 278 3	Elite	159	French Napoleonic Infantry Tactics 1792–1815
978 1 85532 364 3	Warrior	8	British Cavalryman 1792–1815
978 1 84603 470 1	General Military		Armies of the Napoleonic Wars

Visit the Osprey website

- Information about forthcoming books
- Author information
- Read extracts and see sample pages
- Sign up for our free newsletters
- Competitions and prizes



www.ospreypublishing.com

To order any of these titles, or for more information on Osprey Publishing, contact:

North America: uscustomerservice@ospreypublishing.com

UK & Rest of World: customerservice@ospreypublishing.com

Men-at-Arms • 456

The uniforms, equipment, history and organization of the world's military forces, past and present

Full colour artwork

Photographs

Unrivalled detail

Illustrations

Mounted Grenadiers of the Imperial Guard

The most imposing of all the troops of Napoleon's Old Guard were the heavy cavalry of the Mounted Grenadiers – veterans chosen for their physical stature and proven bravery, riding great black horses with the disdainful pride of 'Giants' or 'Gods'. Drawing upon original regimental records and correspondence, this is the most detailed short history of the Mounted Grenadiers ever published in English. Illustrated with photos of rare surviving weapons and uniform items, and specially researched colour plates, this book tells the story of the Mounted Grenadiers, from their formation in 1804 to the moment they stalked off the field at Waterloo in 1815.

US $17.95 UK £9.99
CAN $19.95

ISBN 978-1-84603-449-7

OSPREY PUBLISHING

www.ospreypublishing.com